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Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 69/143. It is based largely on the discussions held by the Commission for Social Development, the intergovernmental body responsible for the follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development, at its fifty-third session, the priority theme of which was "Rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world". The present report highlights progress made so far, as well as the challenges encountered, in implementing the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development, focusing on its three main objectives, namely, the eradication of poverty, the promotion of employment and decent work for all, and social integration. It also addresses the special needs of Africa and the least developed countries and progress made in the implementation of programmes related to social groups, and examines some specific areas in which social development can contribute to achieve socially, economically and environmentally sustainable development. The report concludes with a set of recommendations for the consideration by the Assembly.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 69/143, the General Assembly reaffirmed that the Commission for Social Development served as the main United Nations forum for an intensified global dialogue on social development issues, and called upon Member States, the relevant specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system and civil society to enhance their support for its work. Acknowledging the inclusion of the goals to end poverty and to incorporate full and productive employment and decent work for all in the sustainable development goals,[1] the Assembly reiterated the continued importance of giving due consideration to poverty eradication, social integration, full employment and decent work for all in the ongoing discussion on the post-2015 development agenda. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its seventieth session on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development.

2. The present report is based largely on the discussions of the Commission for Social Development at its fifty-third session, held in February 2015. The priority theme of the Commission's 2015-2016 review and policy cycle is "Rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world". In reviewing the implementation of the programme in relation to social groups, the report also includes the situation of indigenous peoples as well as other developments outside the Commission that are relevant to various social groups. It also summarizes the Commission's deliberations on the contributions of social development in the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals, integrating its social, economic and environmental dimensions, and forward-looking strategies to strengthen the social dimensions of sustainable development.

3. The report provides an assessment of progress made in advancing social development, focusing on its three main objectives, namely, the eradication of poverty, the promotion of employment and decent work for all, and social integration. It also addresses the special needs of Africa and the least developed countries, as well as reviews progress made in the implementation of programmes related to social groups, highlighting the situations of young people, older persons, persons with disabilities, families, and indigenous peoples. The report concludes with recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly.

[1] Contained in the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (A/68/970 and Corr.1) submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session, which decided that the proposal of the Open Working Group should be the basis for the integration of the sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda, while recognizing fully that other inputs might also be considered in this intergovernmental negotiation process by the Assembly at its sixty-ninth session.

II. Implementing the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development: the Commission for Social Development at its fifty-third session and beyond

A. Priority theme: rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world

4. The World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen from 6 to 12 March 1995, provided the first opportunity for the world community to focus its attention at the highest political level on the nature and roots of social problems and trends. At the Summit, Member States adopted the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action, which remains to date the most comprehensive action plan for the achievement of social development. Building on earlier commitments, it sets out a vision and a set of norms and explicit commitments to guide actions to achieve social development at the national, regional and international levels.

5. The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action represents a unique consensus on three key objectives of social development, namely, eradicating poverty, promoting full and productive employment, and fostering social integration, and sets out a holistic approach to achieve them. Recognizing that social development cannot be achieved by the social sectors alone, nor through piecemeal initiatives, the approach requires an orientation of values, objectives and priorities towards advancing social progress and a better quality of life and well-being of all. It aspires to "place people at the centre of development by ensuring full participation by all, and direct ... economies to meet human needs more effectively."

6. During the fifty-third session of the Commission for Social Development, Member States acknowledged that progress towards fulfilling the Copenhagen commitments has been uneven, and that the vision and three major objectives adopted at the Summit remain acutely relevant today. In the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals, it is high time to rethink and strengthen social development to ensure that the holistic, integrated, transformative and people-centred approach adopted at the Summit are fully integrated into the post-2015 sustainable development agenda, building on lessons learned from the implementation of the World Summit for Social Development.

1. Progress in poverty eradication

7. Since the Summit, Member States have been making steady progress towards eradicating poverty, one of the three major objectives of social development. The target set out in the Millennium Development Goals, to halve the proportion of people whose income is less than $1.25 a day, had been met at the global level by 2010. However, despite the enormous progress, the level of poverty continues to be high. Of particular concern is the fact that more than 1 billion people are still living below the poverty line, and that in 2011, 2.2 billion people lived just above poverty line (on less than $2 a day), which is a slight decline from 2.59 billion in 1981.[2] Progress has also

[2] See www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview (accessed 19 June 2015).

been uneven across regions.[3] In addition, economic recovery from the recent global economic and financial crisis has been weak in many countries, which adversely affected national efforts to reduce poverty and social exclusion. In countries that adopted austerity measures (including developed countries), especially cuts in social services, the levels of poverty and vulnerability have increased, leading to high social tensions owing to public discontent. It is now widely recognized that the reduction of poverty is a universal agenda, which all countries, not only developing countries, need to address.

8. In the past 20 years, the multidimensionality of poverty as well as the need to address its root/structural causes have been increasingly recognized, leading to more integrated national poverty reduction strategies. Economic growth, while necessary, is not sufficient to reduce poverty. Growth, if it does not benefit all people, further exacerbates inequality and creates social tensions.

9. It is now understood that poverty afflicts different people at different times in the life cycle. Certain groups are particularly vulnerable to poverty, including, among others, women, persons with disabilities, older persons, indigenous peoples, migrants, and ethnic minorities. For example, indigenous peoples, in particular, although they represent only 5 per cent of the global population, make up approximately 15 per cent of the world's poor. This is caused by various factors, including physical and political marginalization, discrimination, loss of traditional livelihoods, poor access to quality education and health care, loss of territories and the denigration of their cultures and languages.

10. While universal programmes, in general, have been proven to be effective in addressing poverty and are intended to reach all people, the most vulnerable and marginalized groups and communities still face barriers (both physical and cultural), and thus, may remain excluded. Complimentary measures are needed to enable those populations to benefit from universal programmes. In addition, people fall into poverty owing to multiple causes, such as loss of jobs, sickness, disability, the global economic crisis, the high rate and volatility of prices for food and energy, conflict, natural disasters, and epidemics, including HIV/AIDS. In order to address specific causes, differentiated or targeted interventions are also necessary.

11. In addition, in view of the sheer magnitude of the global growth of the ageing population, failure to acknowledge the implications of population ageing will undermine the success of efforts to eradicate poverty.

12. The negative impacts of climate change and natural disasters have already been eroding the achievements in poverty reduction in many countries, as those who have escaped poverty are now slipping back into it as a result of such factors. The constructive outcome of the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris from 30 November to 11 December 2015, is critical not only to combat climate change, but also to reduce poverty. Similarly, the linkage between poverty and natural disasters or man-made shocks needs to be further analysed and addressed.

13. People living in poverty or those who are vulnerable to poverty lack assets that are necessary to recover from economic and environmental shocks. In the absence of

[3] The significant reduction occurred in China and the East Asia and Pacific region (939 million in 1990 to 161 million in 2011), while the regions of sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia lag behind.

adequate social protection, they are more likely to fall into or to become trapped in poverty when such shocks do occur. Poverty eradication strategies need to incorporate measures to address the particular vulnerabilities they face and to enhance their resilience, thus assisting them in moving from or staying out of poverty.

14. Poverty and inequality are closely interlinked. In order to tackle widening inequality and the high incidence of poverty, some countries are pursuing inclusive and sustained growth strategies by enhancing productive capacity in the agricultural sector. Others have implemented new poverty reduction strategies that include an employment component focused on vulnerable groups, and the provision of tertiary education for all children, which is aimed at breaking the intergenerational transmission of poverty.

15. Social spending, as an investment to build capabilities at the individual and community levels, is an important factor that contributes to the effectiveness of poverty eradication strategies. Ensuring improved access to basic health care, quality education, clean water and sanitation, nutritious food, land, social protection and decent work will help people move and stay out of poverty. At the same time, such investment builds capable and productive human resources that are key to inclusive and sustained economic growth. In this regard, some countries have increased the allocation of public resources to social sectors in order to reduce poverty and inequality, while others have allocated revenues derived from natural resources to implement social programmes that target the most vulnerable sectors of the population.

2. Employment and decent work for all

16. At the World Summit for Social Development, the creation of employment, the reduction of unemployment and the promotion of appropriately and adequately remunerated employment were identified as three major objectives of social development. Member States made a commitment to promote employment and decent work not only as goals, but also as a means to combat poverty and to promote social integration. Adequately remunerated jobs provide income security and afford opportunities for access to social protection and dignity, and provide a channel through which individuals can relate and contribute to the wider society, therefore providing a pathway to moving out of poverty and social exclusion.

17. Twenty years later, the goal of full employment and decent work for all continues to be one of the biggest challenges facing all countries, with more than 202 million people unemployed worldwide in 2013, an increase from 157 million people in 1995.[4] This is mainly because employment growth has not been sufficient to absorb the growing labour force. Globally, 672 million jobs are needed to provide employment opportunities for the 202 million people who are jobless, and an additional 470 million jobs will be needed for new entrants into the workforce between 2016 and 2030.[5]

18. Young people are disproportionately affected. Unemployment rates for youth are two to three times higher than the average rates for the general population. Even

[4] International Labour Organization, Key Indicators of the Labour Market database. Available from www.ilo.org/empelm/what/WCMS_114240/lang--en/index.htm (accessed 29 September 2014).

[5] International Labour Organization, The global jobs crisis: facts and figures. Available from: https://www.worldwewant2015.org/node/392784 (accessed 19 June 2015).

more worrisome is the fact that in some countries a large number of youth are neither in employment nor in education or training.

19. In relation to unemployment, the share of wages in total gross domestic product (GDP) declined in a majority of countries, both developed and developing, from 2000 to 2008.[6] While labour productivity has increased, the real average wage in the developed countries comprising the Group of 20 has declined between 2006 and 2013. The wage disparities between top and bottom earners have also increased in most countries, owing largely to technological advances, globalization, declines in real minimum wages and other changes in labour market policies and institutions.[7] This pattern of growth in joblessness has made it difficult to achieve further progress in reducing poverty, inequality and social exclusion. Without the provision of opportunities to all segments of society to earn decent income, social cohesion, in some parts of the world, has been eroding or is severely challenged.

20. Furthermore, not all employment provides income security. The majority of people in developing countries work in vulnerable jobs, often in the informal sector, with low wages under poor working conditions and without social protection. Informal or precarious jobs are often the only options available to sustain their livelihoods. It is estimated that three quarters of workers are employed on temporary or short-term contracts, in informal jobs often without any contract, under own-account arrangements or in unpaid family jobs.[8] Even among workers who earn wages and salaries, less than half (42 per cent) are working on a permanent contract. A new trend points to the rise in part-time employment. In the majority of countries with available information, part-time jobs outpaced gains in full-time employment between 2009 and 2013.[9] Women, young people and other disadvantaged groups are overrepresented in both vulnerable employment and the informal sector.

21. Promoting employment and decent work is key to achieving meaningful progress towards inclusive and sustainable development. In countries where labour market policies and institutions have helped to increase real wages, especially for less-skilled workers, there has been a positive change in economic growth and employment. For example, in an effort to improve access to jobs that provide living wages, the Group of 20 has prioritized employment creation, including efforts to bring more women into the labour market. This also helps reduce the burden of social protection systems and enhances productivity.

22. To better prepare workers, it is important to align educational systems with labour markets, as well as to strengthen vocational training that addresses the current and future demands of the labour market, as well as to promote lifelong learning and non-formal education. Flexible work arrangements, such as part-time work and flexible hours, will also help workers, especially females, in balancing work and family life.

23. Specific challenges that are being faced by disadvantaged social groups should be also addressed, for example by shifting the focus of attention away from the negative perception of the financial burden those policies bring towards recognition

[6] International Labour Organization, *World of Work Report 2014: Developing with Jobs* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2014).

[7] E/CN.5/2015/3.

[8] International Labour Organization, *World Employment and Social Outlook 2015: The Changing Nature of Jobs* (Geneva, International Labour Office, 2015).

[9] Ibid.

of the positive contributions they bring to economic development and social progress. The establishment of quotas for the hiring of persons with disabilities has been proven effective. To promote youth employment, innovative strategies that have proved effective include paid internships, youth guarantees, dual education, skills training, vocational education, apprenticeships, entrepreneurship promotion and incentives for businesses that hire young people.

24. Other good practices include the promotion of small- and medium-sized enterprises, the provision of support to sectors which create decent jobs that contribute to environmental protection, rural employment guarantee schemes and conditional and unconditional assistance programmes that promote the formation of human capital. In the European Union, the Europe 2020 growth strategy placed social policies at the core of the Union's economic strategy, setting targets for raising employment rates and lifting at least 20 million people out of poverty. Similarly, in developing countries, there are growing calls for social and economic policies that prioritize the creation of jobs.

25. Finally, the mainstreaming of employment and decent work into the sustainable development agenda is a must. Combatting climate change and environmental degradation poses significant challenges to employment, while the transition to sustainable development paths is bringing job opportunities in new sectors. Social policies can protect and invest in those who will be negatively affected by the transition to green economy. For example, coherent socioeconomic and environmental policies need to be formulated to promote green jobs in the labour-intensive sectors on which disadvantaged social groups and communities depend for their livelihoods.

3. Social integration

26. At the World Summit for Social Development, the importance of social integration to create a society for all, where no one is left behind, was recognized. Social integration or inclusion is critical to the achievement of poverty eradication, full employment and decent work for all, and thus the advancement of social progress for all. The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action defined social integration, rooted in social justice and respect for diversity, both as an objective and a process to realize a pluralistic inclusive society where all persons, regardless of their backgrounds, have rights and responsibilities and actively participate in social, economic, cultural and political life to achieve their full potential in life.

27. In implementing social integration policies, countries have developed a wide variety of strategies towards the achievement of social integration within their national context. Some have focused exclusively on policies targeting certain disadvantaged and vulnerable social groups, such as women, older persons, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, migrants and people living in poverty; others have focused on broader inclusive policies, such as reducing inequality and removing barriers to participation, improving access to social services and productive assets, combatting social exclusion, stereotyping or discrimination, and enhancing social cohesion by managing social tensions or potential conflicts.

28. Many countries have been making efforts to respect diversity and promote social inclusion to achieve inclusive development. Some countries are implementing national programmes that enhance the participation of women, children, girls, persons with disabilities, older persons and ethnic minorities; some have increased

public spending on new plan of action for tackling social exclusion; while others are focusing on combatting social inclusion through local governance structures, including through a quota system to improve the participation of disadvantaged groups at the local level. Some countries have launched policies that target a number of social groups, including older persons, and seek to promote the overall well-being of persons at risk of poverty and social exclusion through a multidimensional approach that involves income and social benefits, employment, education, health and environment, social services and culture. Proactive measures to combat discrimination aimed at improving the lives of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups are being actively pursued in some countries. In this regard, efforts should be also made to involve vulnerable groups, communities and individuals in the formulation and implementation of an inclusive sustainable development agenda at the national and local levels.

29. One of the major challenges to social cohesion is widening inequality, both income and non-income, and within and among countries, which has heightened social tensions and even unrest, and which undermines development efforts and unravels progress made thus far. Many countries have been addressing inequalities and disparities across groups and regions through inclusive policy measures that focus on inclusive and equitable growth, poverty reduction and social protection interventions. For example, some countries have redistributed revenues from commodities such as oil and gas to less developed regions in order to tackle inequality. Some regions, such as Latin America, have successfully curbed inequalities through effective social protection programmes that guarantee minimum income and improve access to and quality of education, including secondary and tertiary levels, develop more supportive labour market policies, increase social expenditure beyond education, increase wages and enact progressive taxation, coupled with redistribution, and the adoption of democratic political processes.

30. Gender-based inequality is a major barrier to social integration. Measures should be taken in such areas as: enhancement of the participation of women in all aspects of life activities, including in labour unions and cooperatives; enactment of laws that set out a minimum wage for all people; and the provision of opportunities to empower women, including their increased participation in the labour market.

31. There is growing consensus on the potential role of social protection for inclusive and equitable development, thus promoting social integration/inclusion. While large majorities of people in developing countries are still living without any social protection, a positive trend is that an increased number of countries are adopting social protection measures to address poverty and inequality, as well as to enhance resilience to shocks. Those social protection measures include universal social protection floors as well as social safety nets that target the most vulnerable groups, including people living in poverty, older persons, families with children, youth, and persons with disabilities. In some regions, universal access to social protection is considered as a human right. For example, by making social polices the core of the economic strategy of the European Union for the first time, the Europe 2020 strategy[10] aims to modernize social protection systems, including pension systems.

[10] Available from http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm (accessed 20 July 2015).

B. The special needs of Africa and the least developed countries

1. Africa: economic growth, progress and challenges in social development

32. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Union Social Policy Framework for Africa have been fundamental in guiding national and regional development efforts, in particular efforts aimed at reducing extreme poverty and hunger. Furthermore, the African Union Commission's *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want*[11] and the African Common Position on the post-2015 development agenda[12] present opportunities for an even more robust development agenda for the region. Africa has continued to exhibit solid social and economic gains since the adoption of NEPAD. Poverty levels are declining, and access to and quality of public services, education, health and gender outcomes are improving.

33. The economic growth in the region accelerated after the decline in 2012 and is expected to reach 4.0 per cent in 2015 and to 4.8 per cent in 2016.[13] Falling commodity prices, declining exchange rates and geopolitical instability in central and northern Africa have contributed to the lower forecasts compared with to the pre-crisis years. This relatively high growth, however, has not created decent and productive jobs at a pace that is commensurate with the growth in population. Consequently, levels of poverty and structural unemployment remain high. Effects of the global financial and economic crises, instability of prices of food and energy, epidemics, such as the Ebola virus, geopolitical instability in some countries, environmental disasters and issues of governance have worsened inequalities, vulnerabilities and exclusion in the region.

34. Recent estimates of the World Bank show that in 2011 about 39.6 per cent of Africa's population lived on less than $1.25 a day as compared with 46.6 per cent in 1990.[14] The region, however, will not be able to halve the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015 despite collective efforts. In order to significantly reduce poverty levels, African countries must sustain high economic growth accompanied by structural transformation.

35. While the number of undernourished people throughout the world has declined, it has increased in Africa from 219 million in 2010-2012 to 233 million in 2014-2016.[15] There is a continued long-term underinvestment in the agricultural sector, whereas the food import bill has been increasing significantly.[16] This undermines the

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[11] Available from http://agenda2063.au.int/en/sites/default/files/01_Agenda2063_popular_version_ENG%20FINAL%20April%202015.pdf.

[12] Available from www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Dakar/pdf/African CommonPositionFINAL.pdf.

[13] United Nations, "*World Economic Situation and Prospects 2015*: Update as of mid-2015" (New York, 2015). Available from www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/wesp/wesp_archive/2015wesp_myu_en.pdf.

[14] See World Bank, *Global Monitoring Report 2014/2015: Ending Poverty and Sharing Prosperity* (Washington, D.C., 2014).

[15] See Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development and World Food Programme, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World: meeting the 2015 international hunger targets: taking stock of uneven progress* (Rome, 2015).

[16] Available from www.fao.org/about/who-we-are/director-gen/faodg-statements/detail/en/c/237214/.

region's effort to feed itself, eradicate extreme poverty and become a major exporter of agricultural commodities to the rest of the world.

36. Efforts to reduce poverty and hunger in the near future could be affected by natural calamities, such as the effects of climate change. A large majority of Africa's population relies heavily on climate-sensitive sectors, such as agriculture, fisheries and tourism for their livelihoods.

37. Prospects for sustained job growth in Africa remain weak despite the strong economic performance of the continent over the past decade. The share of vulnerable employment in total employment is very high, and many countries continue to experience declines in the labour income share, which is exacerbating wage and income inequality within countries. African leaders have reached a shared conviction that industrialization is one of the most viable paths to employment-generating growth and development and is a core prerequisite for the structural transformation of its economy. This was reaffirmed by the participants of the Extraordinary Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), that was held in Harare in April 2015. The summit approved the SADC industrialisation strategy and road map, which operationalizes the "SADC Strategy for Economic Transformation: Leveraging the Region's Diverse Resources for Sustainable, Economic and Social Development through Beneficiation and Value Addition".

38. There has also been progress across the region in increasing the enrolment of children in school. However, gender disparities persist in school completion, learning outcomes and secondary and tertiary education in many countries. North Africa has almost achieved universal primary education, with a net enrolment rate of 99 per cent in 2012. In sub-Saharan Africa, net enrolment rates increased from 2 per cent in 1990 to 78 per cent in 2012. The number of children enrolled in primary school more than doubled between 1990 and 2012. Nevertheless, only three out of five pupils complete primary school. About 33 million children of primary school age, of whom 56 per cent were girls, were not in school in 2012, and significant proportions of those children come from disadvantaged backgrounds, have disabilities or live in conflict- affected countries.

39. In terms of health indicators, there have been substantial improvements in the rates of child immunization and survival, and in the number of people who receive antiretroviral therapies. The numbers of deaths related to malaria and HIV/AIDS, the rates of maternal and child mortality, and the number of people newly infected with HIV, have declined in the past decade. In sub-Saharan Africa, maternal mortality declined at an annual rate of 3.6 per cent between 2005 and 2013. Nonetheless, sub-Saharan Africa still has the highest maternal mortality ratio in the world.[17] At that pace, the continent falls far short of the Millennium Development Goal target of reducing the maternal mortality ratio by three quarters by 2015.

40. Progress in reducing the disease burden in Africa remains slow and fragile owing to inadequate health-care systems and a shortage of health technologies and interventions that target diseases that affect predominantly poor and disadvantaged populations. The region is therefore prone to major shocks from neglected tropical diseases, such as the recent outbreak of the Ebola virus in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. In addition to exerting a heavy human toll and fomenting the

[17] United Nations, *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2014* (New York, 2014).

stigmatization and social exclusion of affected individuals and communities, the Ebola outbreak is having a major impact on social and economic progress in the affected countries.[18]

2. Special needs of the least developed countries

41. The least developed countries, of which the large majority are in sub-Saharan Africa, face particular challenges in achieving social development objectives. Foremost, economic growth in those countries needs to be fast enough to create decent jobs and to reduce existing high levels of poverty. However, the rates of growth of the economies of the least developed countries as a whole is expected to further decelerate to 4.9 per cent in 2015 from 5.2 per cent in 2014 and 5.9 per cent in 2013.[19] The economies of ten countries in the group grew at rates close to or higher than 7 per cent in 2014 compared with 13 in 2013. The slowest rate of growth was recorded in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, the countries most affected by the Ebola outbreak.

42. The risks and uncertainties associated with the economic outlook and the persistent pattern of relatively weak and volatile economic growth are symptomatic of the limits to the production structures of the least developed countries and their extreme structural vulnerability to shocks, which have great impact on the human and social development in these countries. Lessons from success stories of a few of those countries and from emerging countries suggest that those challenges can be effectively addressed through productive capacity-building and structural transformation.

43. The prevalence of undernourishment in the least developed countries is expected to decrease from 27.7 per cent in 2010-2012 to 26.7 per cent in 2014-2016.[15] Addressing food and nutrition security involves the enhancement of governance for food security and improvement of labour productivity through the use of adequate technologies and farm management practices and addressing issues related to access of small farmers and women to land, credit and extension services. The complex nature of the problems requires a holistic and multi-stakeholder approach that targets agricultural production and productivity, rural development, resilience-building, education and health, public works, trade and market access.

44. Even though progress in completion rates of primary schooling was slow, net primary enrolment in the least developed countries increased from 78 per cent in 2010 to 81 per cent in the period 2011-2012.[20] Gender parity at that level of education was achieved in some countries. The rate of enrolment in secondary education was still low and increased moderately at 43 per cent. The limited qualifications of teachers and the inadequacy of classroom equipment hindered further progress in this sector.

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[18] FAO, "Grave food security concerns following the Ebola outbreak in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea", Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture, Special Alert, No. 333 (2 September 2014).

[19] See *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2015* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.15.II.C.2), available from www.org/en/development/desa/policy/wesp/.

[20] See Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, *State of the Least Developed Countries 2014: Follow-up of the Implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries* (2014). Available from http://unohrlls.org/custom-content/uploads/2014/10/State-of-the-Least-Developed-Countries-Report-2014.pdf.

45. Progress was made in reducing child mortality rates in most of the least developed countries, although not at a rate sufficient to achieve the Millennium Development Goal target of a two thirds reduction from the level of 1990. On average, the mortality rate of children below five years of age was high, at 81 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2013. Most of those countries are not expected to meet the Millennium Development Goal target of a three-quarter reduction in the maternal mortality rate from the level of 1990. The prevalence of persons with HIV as a percentage of the population aged 15 to 49 in this group of countries declined marginally, from 2 per cent in 2010 to 1.9 per cent in 2013.

46. Many of the least developed countries deploy formal safety nets that include schemes that focus on continued access to basic services, reduce income and consumption poverty and promote household investments in human capital to decrease intergenerational poverty, while some use income generation schemes for social protection. Greater investment and continued efforts, including international cooperation, are needed to accelerate progress in social development in these countries.

C. Implementation of programmes related to social groups

47. As part of its programme of work, the Commission also reviewed the implementation of programmes related to social groups.

48. The Summit took note of the role of the family in contributing to social integration. Its Programme of Action indicated that helping families in fulfilment of their supporting, educating and nurturing roles required social and economic policies that are designed to meet the needs of families and their individual members. Greater attention needs to be given to the most disadvantaged and vulnerable members, with special attention directed to the care of children. Furthermore, special attention should be paid to the promotion of equal partnership between women and men in the family and to the promotion of mutual respect, tolerance and cooperation within both the family and society.

49. Over the past 20 years, a variety of family-oriented policies has focused on achieving those goals. Among them, programmes and policies have aimed at promoting work-family balance and gender equality and at encouraging more equitable sharing of household responsibilities between men and women. Governments have increased the provision of parental leave, including paternity leave. Many have enacted legal provisions to ensure flexible working arrangements and to offer subsidies to family-friendly companies. Investments have also been made in early childhood education and the provision of child care for children below 3 years of age. Such policies have contributed to the creation of better work-family balance for women and men and have been credited with greater labour participation of women and higher fertility rates in recent years across countries that are members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

50. Globally, the number of persons aged 60 or above is expected to more than triple by 2100, increasing from 784 million in 2011 to 2 billion in 2050 and 2.8 billion in 2100. Already, 65 per cent of the world's older persons live in the less developed regions, and by 2050, the rate will increase to 79 per cent. Older women outnumber older men and often face multiple forms of discrimination, including neglect, abuse, gender-based violence, lack of access to basic services and prevention of ownership

of assets. Despite the particular challenges facing older women, as well as the fact that they tend to live longer than men and are more likely to live alone, the feminization of ageing is almost entirely absent from the debate of the international community. This was recognized by the Commission for Social Development at its fifty-third session, at which a call was made for increased focus on older women in the context of the Commission o on the Status of Women.

51. The upcoming start of the third review and appraisal of the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, was set in motion following the endorsement of the timeline and modalities for carrying out the review by the fifty-third session of the Commission for Social Development, in which it was decided that the global review would be held in 2018 at the fifty-fifth session. In order to advance the social inclusion and participation of older persons, the focus of the third cycle will be on the bottom-up approach, rather than on an agreed particular theme for the review and appraisal process. The modalities resolution also noted the appointment by the Human Rights Council of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons, whose mandate includes the assessment of the human rights implications of the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action.

52. The need to involve youth in the monitoring and accountability framework of the post-2015 agenda, and the institutionalization of youth participation mechanisms in the agenda were stressed by the Commission for Social Development during its fifty-third session. Youth are not the object of youth policies, but are part of the solution. Youth are particularly affected by lack of access to opportunities and resources, and unemployment and underemployment.

53. The development of youth has been especially threatened by anti-crisis measures. The development of skills, the quality of education, especially for girls and young women, and technical and vocational training for a successful transition into the labour market are of paramount importance. There is a need to empower youth, involve young people in political decisions, develop civic engagement and improve strategies and structures to strengthen the participation of youth in a successful and sustainable way. In this regard, it is important to empower youth to assume political leadership.

54. In the area of disability, efforts and progress have been made to further strengthen the mainstreaming of persons with disabilities into global development frameworks, following the high-level meeting on disability and development of the General Assembly in 2013. The outcome of the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, that took place from 14 to 18 March 2015 in Sendai, Japan, reflects the importance of mainstreaming the participation of persons with disabilities into all stages of disaster risk reduction and responses, and their roles as resources and agents of change in disaster risk reduction and resilience building of communities. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030) underscored that significant efforts are needed to ensure that disability-related data collection and needs assessments take place at every stage of policy and programme development and implementation. Lessons and successful experiences in operationalizing disability-inclusive disaster risk-reduction strategies can also be drawn on to assist the development and implementation of other post-2015 international development agenda.

55. In this regard, explicit and implicit references to disability in recently proposed sustainable development goals are promising. However, concerted efforts are required to ensure that they will be retained in the outcome document of the post-2015 development agenda and further translated in its implementation by making sure that any review and follow-up is carried out in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other relevant international commitments on disability and development. The rights, well-being and perspectives of persons with disabilities must be incorporated into the global development agenda. To achieve this: (a) the rights of persons with disabilities need to be mainstreamed into all development policy and programming; and (b) efforts must be made to identify the challenges faced by persons with disabilities to participate in all aspects of economic, social and development programmes and to find solutions to overcome those challenges. In addition a strong international mechanism for systematic review and measurement of progress made and obstacles faced in the implementation of a disability-inclusive post-2015 development agenda should also be prioritized.

56. Indigenous peoples are another social group who face particular challenges in their struggle for social and economic progress. It is estimated that there are approximately 370 million indigenous peoples in the world living in some 90 countries. They continue to suffer disproportionately from high poverty rates and poor access to education and health care, and they are often politically marginalized. Indigenous peoples' territories are often isolated from other regions, with poor infrastructure and limited services. Their territories are also frequently targeted for natural resource extraction and other development activities from which they receive limited benefits. Since the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, there is a growing understanding that increased efforts are needed to meaningfully implement the provisions of the Declaration. Subsequently, the General Assembly organized a high-level plenary meeting in 2014, known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, in order to share perspectives and best practices to pursue the objectives of the Declaration. The outcome document of the World Conference contains a series of commitments calling for multifaceted action by a range of actors, first and foremost Member States, but also the United Nations system, as well as indigenous peoples themselves.

57. In the outcome document, Member States committed to take appropriate measures at the national level, including legislative, policy and administrative, to promote awareness of the declaration among all sectors of society and to develop national action plans, strategies or other measures, where relevant, in cooperation with indigenous peoples, to achieve the ends of the declaration. The outcome document also contains recognitions and commitments by States on various issues that are not explicitly covered by the declaration, including disaggregation of statistical data on indigenous peoples, the empowerment of indigenous women and addressing violence against them, and the provision of support for the occupations, traditional substance activities, economies and food security of indigenous peoples.

58. The outcome document also requests that the Secretary-General develop a system-wide action plan to ensure a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the declaration. This action plan is in the process of being developed in close cooperation with the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues.

D. Contributions of social development to the transition from Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals

59. The emerging contour of the post-2015 unified, universal and transformative global development agenda indicates that it will be a plan of action for people, the planet and prosperity. It will consolidate collective efforts to reduce poverty and hunger, combat inequalities, achieve social progress, and foster inclusive and sustained economic growth, while protecting the environment, in order to achieve sustainable development that will realize a life with dignity for all. This is an agenda of action for all segments of society, where people are not only beneficiaries but also active agents of transformation.

60. Since the Summit, the world has become increasingly globalized, digitalized, and inter-connected. It is facing complex and inter-related challenges across economic, social and environmental fields, including rising inequalities within and between countries, persistently high unemployment rates, particularly among youth, social tensions and conflicts, environmental degradation and the negative impact of climate change. Those challenges can no longer be effectively tackled by a traditional sector-based approach. A more holistic, coherent, and integrated policy framework is necessary to consolidate actions by all stakeholders.

61. The core objectives of social development and the principles of social justice and people-centred development defined at the Summit capture the values underlining sustainable development. Social policy strengthens human capacity and resilience that are necessary for economic and environmental sustainability. Fulfilling social development goals is therefore fundamental to achieving socially, economically and environmentally sustainable development. Further efforts should be made to effectively integrate social policy into broader policymaking processes. The key challenge is to identify, analyse and articulate key interlinkages between social and economic and social and environmental dimensions and formulate policies to leverage the synergies among the three dimensions.

1. Addressing interlinkages between social and economic dimensions

62. Traditionally, there has been a perceived conflict between economic and social objectives, as the mainstream view was that economic growth would lead to social progress and a strong focus on social objectives would slow down economic growth. However, recent experiences of some developing countries has demonstrated that innovative social policy improves the well-being of people without sacrificing productivity, thus reconciling economic and social dimensions. Comprehensive and well-designed social policies have proven to be effective in reducing poverty and inequality and in maximizing opportunities for all to participate in productive economic activities, by improving access to basic services and productive resources, enhancing skills and well-being, and mitigating risks from economic and environmental shocks. In this regard, conditional and unconditional cash transfer programmes are good examples.

63. The promotion of decent jobs and the expansion of social protection can also serve as key elements that could reconcile social, economic and environmental objectives. Decent work opportunities and universal basic social protection ensure basic income levels for all, while at the same time enhancing labour market

participation, and effectively addressing a major challenge of "low productivity traps".

64. Investing in decent work and social protection has proven to be critical not only for the sustained reduction of poverty and the promotion of economic growth, but also for the promotion of social inclusion, dignity, self-definition, motivation and engagement of people. It also contributes to social and political stability that creates a favourable environment for economic growth and environmental protection, through social dialogue and participatory mechanisms for policy design and implementation (such as the new social contract in Tunisia). Core labour standards of the International Labour Organization must be implemented in all countries. Furthermore, the issue of the transformation of informal labour and undeclared work, or vulnerable jobs, into better structured, formal and declared employment needs further attention in the post-2015 development agenda. In addition, minimum wage is potentially one of the important tools to boost domestic demand while reducing poverty.

65 Well-designed social protection systems shield people from economic shocks, reduce risks and enhance resilience, especially among the most vulnerable and, as such, could serve as an effective policy tool for enabling the transition towards sustainable development. Some social transfer programmes (such as conditional or non-conditional cash transfer) are designed to address multiple dimensions of poverty and exclusion by providing guaranteed minimum income with improved access to education and health care, and possibly skills or job training. They thus also contribute to expanding domestic demand and enhancing human capability, a key to the achievement of inclusive and sustained growth. The Social Protection Floor initiative to tackle multiple dimensions of poverty, inequality and social exclusion is a key opportunity to promote sustainable development.[21] By establishing nationally defined and context-specific social protection floors to enhance access to social security and essential social services, countries make a tangible step towards poverty eradication and social integration.

2. Addressing the "missing" linkage between the environment and the social dimensions of sustainable development

66. The linkage between the social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development remains less examined and needs to be further strengthened. This may involve a fundamental shift in the way we measure the progress of sustainable development. For example, one potential approach would be to assign social and economic values to certain natural assets. Currently, no costs are associated with the degradation of natural assets, although the degradation of water and air quality clearly leads to poor health (human or social costs) and higher costs for health-care systems (economic costs). Soil erosion, deforestation or reduction in fish stocks had disproportionately negative impacts on people living in poverty who depend on them (social and economic costs), while those who owned and controlled high-value natural assets, such as land, would accumulate wealth, further exacerbating poverty and inequality. Public policy, in particular social policy, would have a significant role in rectifying those imbalances, while also bear positive impact on the natural environment.

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[21] Further information available from www.socialprotectionfloor-gateway.org/ and www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/features/WCMS_141818/lang-en/index.htm.

67. More recently, there has been an attempt to address some key linkages among poverty eradication, rural development, environmental protection, and job creation in emerging green sectors. As the most vulnerable and marginalized people in many countries often live in rural and agricultural areas, their livelihoods are intricately linked to the natural environment. Therefore, expanding their income generating opportunities into sectors associated with natural resources (for example, conservation of forests and coastal areas, water management, sustainable agriculture, among others) is the most effective way of reducing poverty, while at the same time protecting the environment. Poverty reduction policies and strategies should target activities and enhance peoples' capacity in such areas, including through more productive, safe and sustainable agriculture, land tenure policy, and enhancement of value added from productive activities.

68. At the same time, it is important to integrate social perspectives into environmental policies. Policies to prevent environmental degradation and preserve natural assets or natural capital need to incorporate the needs of people living in poverty and other vulnerable groups and communities, and support their access to decent jobs and/or enhance their capacity to assist them escaping from poverty and exclusion.

3. Strengthening institutional capacities

69. Institutional capacities, at the national, regional and global levels, to implement and monitor sustainable development goals and ensure accountability need to be strengthened. In particular, national capacity in collecting and analysing statistical data, especially disaggregated data (by gender, age, ethnicity, region), is critical for enabling evidence-based policymaking that integrates all three dimensions. Such data helps reorient policies and resources to the most vulnerable regions, areas, communities or social groups.

70. There is a need to view all human rights both as a means and an end to achieve sustainable development. Their standards and principles, in both process and substance, should be valued to attain the sustainable development goals. Integrating human rights principles such as non-discrimination, equality, respect for human dignity and cultural diversity into the post-2015 follow-up mechanisms would help enable people-centred sustainable development and address the structural causes of poverty, inequality, social injustice and environmental degradation as well as ensure accountability. Human rights instruments (such as treaty mechanisms) and a multi-layered framework of accountability could be effective tools to follow up the sustainable development goals, which may be extended to the private sector, for example through the use of human rights impact assessments or due diligence. In this regard, the Commission for Social Development could play an important role by utilizing and strengthening existing mechanisms within its mandate.

III. Conclusions

71. The vision, principles and goals adopted at the World Summit for Social Development continue to be relevant today. While enormous progress has been made since the Summit, progress in advancing social development goals remains uneven. Widening inequalities, high incidence of unemployment, underemployment and vulnerable work and lack of social protection hinder progress towards poverty eradication and other social development goals.

Role of the Commission for Social Development

72. Social development and social policy are fundamental to realizing the people-centred inclusive and sustainable development envisioned in the emerging post-2105 global development agenda. There is an urgent need to identify ways and means to leverage the linkages and synergies among the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. In this regard, the Commission for Social Development has a very important role to play, given the call for an integrated policy approach in the emerging post-2015 sustainable development agenda and its experience in the implementation of the World Summit for Social Development. The Commission, in its 2015-16 cycle, is engaged in a review of what has and what has not worked towards sustaining social development, and consideration of forward-looking strategies to address emerging challenges, such as widening inequality, climate change, economic crises, environmental degradation, depletion of natural resources, spread of diseases and external threats, including cross-border terrorism. This work can directly contribute to the effort to strengthen implementation of the post-2015 development agenda once it is adopted by the General Assembly at its seventieth session. Also, the Commission could strengthen global partnerships and international cooperation for strengthening social development to achieve the sustainable development goals.

IV. Recommendations

73. In order to accelerate progress towards the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and other social development goals within the post-2015 development framework, the General Assembly may wish to consider the following recommendations:

(a) **Member States should renew their commitments to further advance social development by intensifying their efforts to implement the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, within the context of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda;**

(b) **Governments should effectively address the interlinkages among the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, including identifying and managing potential conflicts and creating synergies among them. In this context, institutions and capacity should be strengthened in order to foster policy integration at all levels; the promotion of decent work and social protection could serve as effective tools to reconcile social, economic, and environmental objectives;**

(c) **While a universal approach is effective in addressing poverty, inequality and exclusion, the specific needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged social groups and individuals should also be fully reflected in the implementation of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda. In this regard, the capacity of Governments in collecting and analysing disaggregated data should be strengthened;**

(d) **The role of the Commission for Social Development should be strengthened as a potential venue for following up the social dimensions of the sustainable development goals.**

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Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security

Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit herewith the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security. The Group was established pursuant to paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 68/243.

* A/70/150.

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Report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security

Summary

Information and communications technologies (ICTs) provide immense opportunities and continue to grow in importance for the international community. However, there are disturbing trends that create risks to international peace and security. Effective cooperation among States is essential to reduce those risks.

The 2015 Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security examined existing and potential threats arising from the use of ICTs by States and considered actions to address them, including norms, rules, principles and confidence-building measures. In addition, the Group examined how international law applies to the use of ICTs by States. Building on the work of previous Groups, the present Group made important progress in those areas.

The present report significantly expands the discussion of norms. The Group recommended that States cooperate to prevent harmful ICT practices and should not knowingly allow their territory to be used for internationally wrongful acts using ICT. It called for the increased exchange of information and assistance to prosecute terrorist and criminal use of ICTs. In doing so, the Group emphasized that States should guarantee full respect for human rights, including privacy and freedom of expression.

One important recommendation was that a State should not conduct or knowingly support ICT activity that intentionally damages or otherwise impairs the use and operation of critical infrastructure. States should also take appropriate measures to protect their critical infrastructure from ICT threats. States should not harm the information systems of the authorized emergency response teams of another State or use those teams to engage in malicious international activity. States should encourage the responsible reporting of ICT vulnerabilities and take reasonable steps to ensure the integrity of the supply chain and prevent the proliferation of malicious ICT tools, techniques or harmful hidden functions.

Confidence-building measures increase cooperation and transparency and reduce the risk of conflict. The Group identified a number of voluntary confidence-building measures to increase transparency and suggested that States consider additional ones to strengthen cooperation. The Group called for regular dialogue with broad participation under the auspices of the United Nations and through bilateral, regional and multilateral forums. While States have a primary responsibility to maintain a secure and peaceful ICT environment, international cooperation would benefit from the appropriate participation of the private sector, academia and civil society.

Capacity-building is essential for cooperation and confidence-building. The 2013 report of the Group (see A/68/98) called for the international community to assist in improving the security of critical ICT infrastructure, help to develop technical skills and advise on appropriate legislation, strategies and regulation. The present Group reiterated those conclusions and emphasized that all States can learn from each other about threats and effective responses to them.

The Group emphasized the importance of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the principle of sovereignty as the basis for increased security in the use of ICTs by States. While recognizing the need for further study, the Group noted the inherent right of States to take measures consistent with international law and as recognized in the Charter. The Group also noted the established international legal principles, including, where applicable, the principles of humanity, necessity, proportionality and distinction.

In its thinking on future work, the Group proposed that the General Assembly consider convening a new Group of Governmental Experts in 2016.

The Group asks Member States to actively consider their recommendations and assess how they might be taken up for further development and implementation.

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Foreword by the Secretary-General

Few technologies have been as powerful as information and communications technologies (ICTs) in reshaping economies, societies and international relations. Cyberspace touches every aspect of our lives. The benefits are enormous, but these do not come without risk. Making cyberspace stable and secure can be achieved only through international cooperation, and the foundation of this cooperation must be international law and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The present report contains recommendations developed by governmental experts from 20 States to address existing and emerging threats from uses of ICTs, by States and non-State actors alike, that may jeopardize international peace and security. The experts have built on consensus reports issued in 2010 and 2013, and offer ideas on norm-setting, confidence-building, capacity-building and the application of international law.

Among the complex issues that have emerged is the growing malicious use of ICTs by extremists, terrorists and organized criminal groups. The present report provides suggestions that can help to address this worrisome trend and contribute to the formulation of my forthcoming plan of action on preventing violent extremism.

All States have a stake in making cyberspace more secure. Our efforts in this realm must uphold the global commitment to foster an open, safe and peaceful Internet. In that spirit, I commend the present report to the General Assembly and to a wide global audience as a crucial contribution to the vital effort to secure the ICT environment.

Letter of transmittal

26 June 2015

I have the honour to submit herewith the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security. The Group was established in 2014 pursuant to paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 68/243 on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security. As Chair of the Group, I am pleased to inform you that consensus was reached on the report.

In its resolution, the General Assembly requested that a group of governmental experts be established in 2014, on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, to continue to study, with a view to promoting common understandings, existing and potential threats in the sphere of information security and possible cooperative measures to address them, including norms, rules or principles of responsible behaviour of States and confidence-building measures, the issues of the use of information and communications technologies in conflicts and how international law applies to the use of information and communications technologies by States, as well as the concepts aimed at strengthening the security of global information and telecommunications systems. The Group was also asked to take into account the assessments and recommendations of a previous Group (see A/68/98). The Secretary-General was requested to submit a report on the results of the study to the Assembly at its seventieth session.

In accordance with the terms of the resolution, experts were appointed from 20 States: Belarus, Brazil, China, Colombia, Egypt, Estonia, France, Germany, Ghana, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Spain, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. The list of experts is contained in the annex.

The Group had a comprehensive, in-depth exchange of views on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security. It met in four sessions: the first from 21 to 25 July 2014 at United Nations Headquarters, the second from 12 to 16 January 2014 in Geneva and the third from 13 to 17 April 2015 and the fourth from 22 to 26 June 2015, both at United Nations Headquarters.

The Group would like to thank the experts who served as facilitators in the discussions on the draft report: Florence Mangin (France), Katherine Getao (Kenya), Ausaf Ali (Pakistan), Ricardo Mor (Spain) and Olivia Preston (United Kingdom).

The Group wishes to express its appreciation for the contribution of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, which served as a consultant to the Group and was represented by James Lewis and Kerstin Vignard. The Group also wishes to express its appreciation to Ewen Buchanan of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, who served as Secretary of the Group, and to other Secretariat officials who assisted the Group.

(*Signed*) Carlos Luís Dantas Coutinho **Perez**
Chair of the Group

I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/243 on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security, the Secretary-General, on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, established a group of governmental experts to continue to study, with a view to promoting common understandings, existing and potential threats in the sphere of information security and possible cooperative measures to address them, including norms, rules or principles of responsible behaviour of States and confidence-building measures, the issues of the use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) in conflicts and how international law applies to the use of ICTs by States, as well as relevant international concepts aimed at strengthening the security of global information and telecommunications systems.

2. An open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment is essential for all and requires effective cooperation among States to reduce risks to international peace and security. The present report reflects the recommendations of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security and builds upon the work of previous Groups (see A/65/201 and A/68/98). The Group examined relevant international concepts and possible cooperative measures pertinent to its mandate. It reaffirmed that it is in the interest of all States to promote the use of ICTs for peaceful purposes and to prevent conflict arising from their use.

II. Existing and emerging threats

3. ICTs provide immense opportunities for social and economic development and continue to grow in importance for the international community. There are, however, disturbing trends in the global ICT environment, including a dramatic increase in incidents involving the malicious use of ICTs by State and non-State actors. These trends create risks for all States, and the misuse of ICTs may harm international peace and security.

4. A number of States are developing ICT capabilities for military purposes. The use of ICTs in future conflicts between States is becoming more likely.

5. The most harmful attacks using ICTs include those targeted against the critical infrastructure and associated information systems of a State. The risk of harmful ICT attacks against critical infrastructure is both real and serious.

6. The use of ICTs for terrorist purposes, beyond recruitment, financing, training and incitement, including for terrorist attacks against ICTs or ICT-dependent infrastructure, is an increasing possibility that, if left unaddressed, may threaten international peace and security.

7. The diversity of malicious non-State actors, including criminal groups and terrorists, their differing motives, the speed at which malicious ICT actions can occur and the difficulty of attributing the source of an ICT incident all increase risk. States are rightfully concerned about the danger of destabilizing misperceptions, the potential for conflict and the possibility of harm to their citizens, property and economy.

8. Different levels of capacity for ICT security among States can increase vulnerability in an interconnected world.

III. Norms, rules and principles for the responsible behaviour of States

9. The ICT environment offers both opportunities and challenges to the international community in determining how norms, rules and principles can apply to State conduct of ICT-related activities. One objective is to identify further voluntary, non-binding norms for responsible State behaviour and to strengthen common understandings to increase stability and security in the global ICT environment.

10. Voluntary, non-binding norms of responsible State behaviour can reduce risks to international peace, security and stability. Accordingly, norms do not seek to limit or prohibit action that is otherwise consistent with international law. Norms reflect the expectations of the international community, set standards for responsible State behaviour and allow the international community to assess the activities and intentions of States. Norms can help to prevent conflict in the ICT environment and contribute to its peaceful use to enable the full realization of ICTs to increase global social and economic development.

11. Previous reports of the Group reflected an emerging consensus on responsible State behaviour in the security and use of ICTs derived from existing international norms and commitments. The task before the present Group was to continue to study, with a view to promoting common understandings, norms of responsible State behaviour, determine where existing norms may be formulated for application to the ICT environment, encourage greater acceptance of norms and identify where additional norms that take into account the complexity and unique attributes of ICTs may need to be developed.

12. The Group noted the proposal of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan for an international code of conduct for information security (see A/69/723).

13. Taking into account existing and emerging threats, risks and vulnerabilities, and building upon the assessments and recommendations contained in the 2010 and 2013 reports of the previous Groups, the present Group offers the following recommendations for consideration by States for voluntary, non-binding norms, rules or principles of responsible behaviour of States aimed at promoting an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment:

(a) Consistent with the purposes of the United Nations, including to maintain international peace and security, States should cooperate in developing and applying measures to increase stability and security in the use of ICTs and to prevent ICT practices that are acknowledged to be harmful or that may pose threats to international peace and security;

(b) In case of ICT incidents, States should consider all relevant information, including the larger context of the event, the challenges of attribution in the ICT environment and the nature and extent of the consequences;

(c) States should not knowingly allow their territory to be used for internationally wrongful acts using ICTs;

(d) States should consider how best to cooperate to exchange information, assist each other, prosecute terrorist and criminal use of ICTs and implement other cooperative measures to address such threats. States may need to consider whether new measures need to be developed in this respect;

(e) States, in ensuring the secure use of ICTs, should respect Human Rights Council resolutions 20/8 and 26/13 on the promotion, protection and enjoyment of human rights on the Internet, as well as General Assembly resolutions 68/167 and 69/166 on the right to privacy in the digital age, to guarantee full respect for human rights, including the right to freedom of expression;

(f) A State should not conduct or knowingly support ICT activity contrary to its obligations under international law that intentionally damages critical infrastructure or otherwise impairs the use and operation of critical infrastructure to provide services to the public;

(g) States should take appropriate measures to protect their critical infrastructure from ICT threats, taking into account General Assembly resolution 58/199 on the creation of a global culture of cybersecurity and the protection of critical information infrastructures, and other relevant resolutions;

(h) States should respond to appropriate requests for assistance by another State whose critical infrastructure is subject to malicious ICT acts. States should also respond to appropriate requests to mitigate malicious ICT activity aimed at the critical infrastructure of another State emanating from their territory, taking into account due regard for sovereignty;

(i) States should take reasonable steps to ensure the integrity of the supply chain so that end users can have confidence in the security of ICT products. States should seek to prevent the proliferation of malicious ICT tools and techniques and the use of harmful hidden functions;

(j) States should encourage responsible reporting of ICT vulnerabilities and share associated information on available remedies to such vulnerabilities to limit and possibly eliminate potential threats to ICTs and ICT-dependent infrastructure;

(k) States should not conduct or knowingly support activity to harm the information systems of the authorized emergency response teams (sometimes known as computer emergency response teams or cybersecurity incident response teams) of another State. A State should not use authorized emergency response teams to engage in malicious international activity.

14. The Group observed that, while such measures may be essential to promote an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment, their implementation may not immediately be possible, in particular for developing countries, until they acquire adequate capacity.

15. Given the unique attributes of ICTs, additional norms could be developed over time.

IV. Confidence-building measures

16. Confidence-building measures strengthen international peace and security. They can increase interstate cooperation, transparency, predictability and stability. In their work to build confidence to ensure a peaceful ICT environment, States should take into consideration the Guidelines for Confidence-building Measures adopted by the Disarmament Commission in 1988 and endorsed by consensus by the General Assembly in resolution 43/78 (H). To enhance trust and cooperation and reduce the risk of conflict, the Group recommends that States consider the following voluntary confidence-building measures:

(a) The identification of appropriate points of contact at the policy and technical levels to address serious ICT incidents and the creation of a directory of such contacts;

(b) The development of and support for mechanisms and processes for bilateral, regional, subregional and multilateral consultations, as appropriate, to enhance inter-State confidence-building and to reduce the risk of misperception, escalation and conflict that may stem from ICT incidents;

(c) Encouraging, on a voluntary basis, transparency at the bilateral, subregional, regional and multilateral levels, as appropriate, to increase confidence and inform future work. This could include the voluntary sharing of national views and information on various aspects of national and transnational threats to and in the use of ICTs; vulnerabilities and identified harmful hidden functions in ICT products; best practices for ICT security; confidence-building measures developed in regional and multilateral forums; and national organizations, strategies, policies and programmes relevant to ICT security;

(d) The voluntary provision by States of their national views of categories of infrastructure that they consider critical and national efforts to protect them, including information on national laws and policies for the protection of data and ICT-enabled infrastructure. States should seek to facilitate cross-border cooperation to address critical infrastructure vulnerabilities that transcend national borders. These measures could include:

(i) A repository of national laws and policies for the protection of data and ICT-enabled infrastructure and the publication of materials deemed appropriate for distribution on these national laws and policies;

(ii) The development of mechanisms and processes for bilateral, subregional, regional and multilateral consultations on the protection of ICT-enabled critical infrastructure;

(iii) The development on a bilateral, subregional, regional and multilateral basis of technical, legal and diplomatic mechanisms to address ICT-related requests;

(iv) The adoption of voluntary national arrangements to classify ICT incidents in terms of the scale and seriousness of the incident, for the purpose of facilitating the exchange of information on incidents.

17. States should consider additional confidence-building measures that would strengthen cooperation on a bilateral, subregional, regional and multilateral basis. These could include voluntary agreements by States to:

(a) Strengthen cooperative mechanisms between relevant agencies to address ICT security incidents and develop additional technical, legal and diplomatic mechanisms to address ICT infrastructure-related requests, including the consideration of exchanges of personnel in areas such as incident response and law enforcement, as appropriate, and encouraging exchanges between research and academic institutions;

(b) Enhance cooperation, including the development of focal points for the exchange of information on malicious ICT use and the provision of assistance in investigations;

(c) Establish a national computer emergency response team and/or cybersecurity incident response team or officially designate an organization to fulfil this role. States may wish to consider such bodies within their definition of critical infrastructure. States should support and facilitate the functioning of and cooperation among such national response teams and other authorized bodies;

(d) Expand and support practices in computer emergency response team and cybersecurity incident response team cooperation, as appropriate, such as information exchange about vulnerabilities, attack patterns and best practices for mitigating attacks, including coordinating responses, organizing exercises, supporting the handling of ICT-related incidents and enhancing regional and sector-based cooperation;

(e) Cooperate, in a manner consistent with national and international law, with requests from other States in investigating ICT-related crime or the use of ICTs for terrorist purposes or to mitigate malicious ICT activity emanating from their territory.

18. The Group reiterates that, given the pace of ICT development and the scope of the threat, there is a need to enhance common understandings and intensify cooperation. In this regard, the Group recommends regular institutional dialogue with broad participation under the auspices of the United Nations, as well as regular dialogue through bilateral, regional and multilateral forums and other international organizations.

V. International cooperation and assistance in ICT security and capacity-building

19. States bear primary responsibility for national security and the safety of their citizens, including in the ICT environment, but some States may lack sufficient capacity to protect their ICT networks. A lack of capacity can make the citizens and critical infrastructure of a State vulnerable or make it an unwitting haven for malicious actors. International cooperation and assistance can play an essential role in enabling States to secure ICTs and ensure their peaceful use. Providing assistance to build capacity in the area of ICT security is also essential for international security, by improving the capacity of States for cooperation and collective action. The Group agreed that capacity-building measures should seek to promote the use of ICTs for peaceful purposes.

20. The Group endorsed the recommendations on capacity-building in the 2010 and 2013 reports. The 2010 report recommended that States identify measures to

support capacity-building in less developed countries. The 2013 report called upon the international community to work together in providing assistance to: improve the security of critical ICT infrastructure; develop technical skills and appropriate legislation, strategies and regulatory frameworks to fulfil their responsibilities; and bridge the divide in the security of ICTs and their use. The present Group also emphasized that capacity-building involves more than a transfer of knowledge and skills from developed to developing States, as all States can learn from each other about the threats that they face and effective responses to those threats.

21. Continuing the work begun through previous United Nations resolutions and reports, including General Assembly resolution 64/211, entitled "Creation of a global culture of cybersecurity and taking stock of national efforts to protect critical information infrastructures", States should consider the following voluntary measures to provide technical and other assistance to build capacity in securing ICTs in countries requiring and requesting assistance:

(a) Assist in strengthening cooperative mechanisms with national computer emergency response teams and other authorized bodies;

(b) Provide assistance and training to developing countries to improve security in the use of ICTs, including critical infrastructure, and exchange legal and administrative best practices;

(c) Assist in providing access to technologies deemed essential for ICT security;

(d) Create procedures for mutual assistance in responding to incidents and addressing short-term problems in securing networks, including procedures for expedited assistance;

(e) Facilitate cross-border cooperation to address critical infrastructure vulnerabilities that transcend national borders;

(f) Develop strategies for sustainability in ICT security capacity-building efforts;

(g) Prioritize ICT security awareness and capacity-building in national plans and budgets, and assign it appropriate weight in development and assistance planning. This could include ICT security awareness programmes designed to educate and inform institutions and individual citizens. Such programmes could be carried out in conjunction with efforts by international organizations, including the United Nations and its agencies, the private sector, academia and civil society organizations;

(h) Encourage further work in capacity-building, such as on forensics or on cooperative measures to address the criminal or terrorist use of ICTs.

22. The development of regional approaches to capacity-building would be beneficial, as they could take into account specific cultural, geographic, political, economic or social aspects and allow a tailored approach.

23. In the interest of ICT security capacity-building, States may consider forming bilateral and multilateral cooperation initiatives that would build on established partnership relations. Such initiatives would help to improve the environment for effective mutual assistance between States in their response to ICT incidents and could be further developed by competent international organizations, including the

United Nations and its agencies, the private sector, academia and civil society organizations.

VI. How international law applies to the use of ICTs

24. The 2013 report stated that international law, and in particular the Charter of the United Nations, is applicable and is essential to maintaining peace and stability and promoting an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment. Pursuant to its mandate, the present Group considered how international law applies to the use of ICTs by States.

25. The adherence by States to international law, in particular their Charter obligations, is an essential framework for their actions in their use of ICTs and to promote an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment. These obligations are central to the examination of the application of international law to the use of ICTs by States.

26. In considering the application of international law to State use of ICTs, the Group identified as of central importance the commitments of States to the following principles of the Charter and other international law: sovereign equality; the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered; refraining in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations; respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; and non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States.

27. State sovereignty and international norms and principles that flow from sovereignty apply to the conduct by States of ICT-related activities and to their jurisdiction over ICT infrastructure within their territory.

28. Building on the work of the previous Groups, and guided by the Charter and the mandate contained in General Assembly resolution 68/243, the present Group offers the following non-exhaustive views on how international law applies to the use of ICTs by States:

(a) States have jurisdiction over the ICT infrastructure located within their territory;

(b) In their use of ICTs, States must observe, among other principles of international law, State sovereignty, sovereign equality, the settlement of disputes by peaceful means and non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States. Existing obligations under international law are applicable to State use of ICTs. States must comply with their obligations under international law to respect and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms;

(c) Underscoring the aspirations of the international community to the peaceful use of ICTs for the common good of mankind, and recalling that the Charter applies in its entirety, the Group noted the inherent right of States to take measures consistent with international law and as recognized in the Charter. The Group recognized the need for further study on this matter;

(d) The Group notes the established international legal principles, including, where applicable, the principles of humanity, necessity, proportionality and distinction;

(e) States must not use proxies to commit internationally wrongful acts using ICTs, and should seek to ensure that their territory is not used by non-State actors to commit such acts;

(f) States must meet their international obligations regarding internationally wrongful acts attributable to them under international law. However, the indication that an ICT activity was launched or otherwise originates from the territory or the ICT infrastructure of a State may be insufficient in itself to attribute the activity to that State. The Group noted that the accusations of organizing and implementing wrongful acts brought against States should be substantiated.

29. The Group noted that common understandings on how international law applies to State use of ICTs are important for promoting an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment.

VII. Conclusions and recommendations for future work

30. There has been significant progress in recognizing the risks to international peace and security from the malicious use of ICTs. Recognizing that ICTs can be a driving force in accelerating progress towards development, and consistent with the need to preserve global connectivity and the free and secure flow of information, the Group considered it useful to identify possible measures for future work, which include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a) Further development by States collectively and individually of concepts for international peace and security in the use of ICTs at the legal, technical and policy levels;

(b) Increased cooperation at regional and multilateral levels to foster common understandings on the potential risks to international peace and security posed by the malicious use of ICTs and on the security of ICT-enabled critical infrastructure.

31. While States have a primary responsibility for maintaining a secure and peaceful ICT environment, effective international cooperation would benefit from identifying mechanisms for the participation, as appropriate, of the private sector, academia and civil society organizations.

32. Areas where further research and study could be useful include concepts relevant to State use of ICTs. The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, which serves all Member States, is one such entity that could be requested to undertake relevant studies, as could other relevant think tanks and research organizations.

33. The United Nations should play a leading role in promoting dialogue on the security of ICTs in their use by States and developing common understandings on the application of international law and norms, rules and principles for responsible State behaviour. Further work could consider initiatives for international dialogue and exchange on ICT security issues. These efforts should not duplicate ongoing

work by other international organizations and forums addressing issues such as criminal and terrorist use of ICTs, human rights and Internet governance.

34. The Group noted the importance of the consideration by the General Assembly of the convening of a new Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security in 2016 to continue to study, with a view to promoting common understandings on existing and potential threats in the sphere of information security and possible cooperative measures to address them, as well as how international law applies to the use of ICTs by States, including norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviour of States, confidence-building measures and capacity-building.

35. The Group acknowledges the valuable efforts in ICT security made by international organizations and regional groups. Work among States on security in the use of ICTs should take these efforts into account, and Member States should, when appropriate, encourage the establishment of new bilateral, regional and multilateral platforms for dialogue, consultation and capacity-building.

36. The Group recommends that Member States give active consideration to the recommendations contained in the present report on how to help to build an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment and assess how they might be taken up for further development and implementation.

Annex

List of members of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security

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New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

New Partnership for Africa's Development: thirteenth consolidated progress report on implementation and international support

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 69/290, coincides with several global milestones relevant to the agenda of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), including the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the 20-year review of implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the prospective adoption of the post-2015 development agenda and the 2015 United Nations climate change prospective agreement, as well as the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. Beyond those global milestones, 2015 is also a landmark year for Africa's development, with the adoption of the African Union Agenda 2063, the long-term, strategic vision for the continent's transformative development over the next 50 years, and its first 10-year Implementation Plan (2014-2023).

The report highlights actions taken by African countries towards achievement of the aims of NEPAD, including increased investment and regional coordination in infrastructure development and regional integration, innovative projects related to agriculture development and climate change adaptation, and strengthened efforts to improve national and regional health-care systems in the wake of the Ebola outbreak. To achieve further progress, however, the continent will need to overcome challenges in all of the NEPAD priority thematic areas and adapt the NEPAD priorities to the new strategic thinking of the African Union.

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Despite extensive efforts in domestic resource mobilization, the report identifies inadequate financing as a major challenge in all sectors and underlines the need for greater investment by African countries and their development partners, as well as for greater efforts to spur private sector investment and public-private partnerships in the region. The report emphasizes the need for African countries to achieve economic transformation through industrialization and diversification. It also stresses the need for the international community to complement the continent's efforts, including through increased financial support, technical assistance and capacity-building, and emphasizes the need for Africa's priorities to be reflected in the post-2015 development agenda.

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 69/290, entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support", the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report on the implementation of the resolution to the Assembly at its seventieth session. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.

2. The report highlights the policy measures undertaken by African countries and organizations in the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), as well as the response of the international community and support provided by the United Nations system during the past year. Activities undertaken by the private sector and civil society in support of NEPAD are also highlighted. The report benefited from information provided by Member States, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NEPAD Agency), the African Peer Review Mechanism secretariat, the regional economic communities, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), members of the United Nations interdepartmental task force on African affairs and other regional and subregional African stakeholders.

II. Action taken by African countries and organizations

3. Adopted in 2001 by African Heads of State and Government, NEPAD is an African-owned and African-led framework for socioeconomic development. In the almost decade and a half since its adoption, the continent has experienced unprecedented economic growth and improved social development. Despite that progress, persistent obstacles and new challenges have hindered the continent's achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and hampered overall socioeconomic progress on the continent.

4. With the aim of spurring transformative change, at the twenty-fourth African Union Summit, held in January 2015 in Addis Ababa, member States adopted Agenda 2063, an ambitious 50-year transformative agenda that outlines a wide-ranging vision for the continent's development, peace and security. Agenda 2063 builds on the NEPAD experience, incorporating all of the sectoral priorities of NEPAD, as well as ongoing national and regional efforts towards its implementation of NEPAD. African Heads of State and Government reaffirmed NEPAD as the strategic vehicle to accelerate the implementation of the African Union's regional integration agenda and recommitted themselves to exercising strong political will and determination to fast-track NEPAD delivery at all levels within the context of Agenda 2063.

5. During the reporting period, the continent took important steps towards realizing both its NEPAD and Agenda 2063 aspirations. In June 2015, African leaders adopted the first 10-year Implementation Plan for Agenda 2063, a comprehensive framework that, inter alia, outlines the goals, targets, flagship projects and implementation framework for the first decade of the Agenda. In addition, the leaders of three regional economic communities — the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the East African Community and the Southern African Development Community — launched the Tripartite Free Trade Area, uniting 26 African countries that comprise roughly half the continent and

account for 55 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP) in pursuit of the strengthened regional trade and integration envisioned by NEPAD.

A. Infrastructure development

6. Recognizing its importance for growth, development and regional integration, African countries committed themselves to implementing the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa, which serves as the continent's overarching framework for infrastructure development.

7. During the reporting period, the NEPAD Agency continued to coordinate large-scale regional and national infrastructure initiatives. Considerable efforts were made towards the implementation of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa Priority Action Plan, which comprises 51 regional and subregional programmes and projects designed to address sector-specific infrastructure deficits in energy, information and communications technology, transport and transboundary waterways.

8. Following the twenty-second African Union Summit, held in January 2014, the African Union Commission and AfDB launched the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa capacity-building project, which is intended to strengthen the capacity of African countries to plan, prepare and coordinate the implementation of regional infrastructure projects. In addition, the NEPAD Agency and the African Union Commission, in collaboration with other partners, developed the Service Delivery Mechanism of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa to bolster early-stage project preparation and development. The Mechanism complements the NEPAD Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility, a multi-donor trust fund that supports the development of regional and continental infrastructure with grants to African governments, regional economic communities and African infrastructure-related institutions.

9. African countries particularly focused on ensuring financing and implementation of the 16 priority infrastructure projects of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa identified in the Dakar Agenda for Action, which was adopted at the Financing Summit for Africa's Infrastructure, held in Dakar in 2014.[1] In October 2014, the NEPAD Agency, in collaboration with the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and the United Nations Global Compact, organized a business forum to identify public-private partnerships to accelerate the implementation of the priority projects.

10. In addition, at the January 2015 African Union Summit, African countries endorsed the Acceleration Strategy of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa as the basis for accelerating implementation of the 16 priority projects. As a follow-up, the World Economic Forum on Africa, held in Cape Town, South Africa from 3 to 5 June 2015, featured the launch of the Continental Business Network of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa, a high-level advocacy and investment platform for increased private sector participation in financing and implementation of the Programme as well as a forum for addressing challenges and

[1] Projects identified are, among others, the Sambangalou hydropower project in West Africa, the Batoka Gorge hydropower project in Zimbabwe, the Dar-es-Salaam Port expansion project in East Africa and the Serenje-Nakonde road in Zambia, which is part of the North-South Corridor.

opportunities relating to infrastructure development in Africa. The Network will comprise leading African and global business and finance bodies as well as regional and international organizations.

11. Progress was also made in the implementation of several Presidential Infrastructure Champion Initiative projects during the reporting period. After the successful closing of a $40 million funding gap, noteworthy progress was made in the "Missing link of the Trans-Sahara Highway" project, which covers more than 4,500 kilometres from Algeria to Nigeria; the project is scheduled for completion in 2016/17. Under the "Optic fibre from Algeria via Niger to Nigeria" project the Algeria section of the network was completed and is now operational. Progress was also recorded on other projects, including the "Trans-Sahara gas pipeline" and the "Kinshasa-Brazzaville bridge road/rail" projects and the "Navigational line from Lake Victoria to the Mediterranean Sea via the River Nile" project, for which the Government of Egypt completed a pre-feasibility study in June 2015.

12. Despite progress, lack of financing remains the major obstacle to the achievement of the continent's infrastructure goals. Realization of its ambitions will require improved mobilization of resources from all relevant funding sources, both public and private, as well as strengthened infrastructure development coordination structures at the national, regional and international levels.

B. Agriculture and food security

13. African countries continued to make progress towards implementing commitments relating to agricultural development and food security during the review period, including the Maputo Declaration commitment to allocate at least 10 per cent of national budgetary resources to agriculture, and the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme commitment to achieve a 6 per cent annual growth rate in agricultural productivity.

14. During the reporting period, African countries took specific steps towards the achievement of those aims. At the twenty-third African Union Summit, held in June 2014 in Malabo, African countries reaffirmed the vision of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme and set relevant targets for the next decade, including upholding the 2003 Maputo targets. Subsequently, the NEPAD Agency and the African Union Commission undertook an extensive consultation process to design the Implementation Strategy and Road Map for the Implementation of the Malabo Declaration on Africa's Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation, which was launched at the twentieth-fourth African Union Summit in January 2015.

15. African countries continued to implement their commitments under the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme during the reporting period. As of May 2015, 50 countries are actively engaging in the Programme process, with 44 having signed Programme compacts and 29 implementing national agriculture and food security investment plans. To assist countries' efforts, the NEPAD Agency established the Continental Framework for Agriculture Education and Training and prepared specialized thematic studies on various themes, including climate-smart agriculture, irrigation and gender-related agriculture issues. The Agency also strengthened the capacities of continental and regional farmer organizations through training and technical and financial support.

16. In 2014, the NEPAD Agency commenced implementation of the Gender Climate Change Agriculture Support Programme, which is aimed at increasing the productivity of women smallholder farmers and supporting their integration into all aspects of the agriculture value chain. The Programme's design and planning engaged a wide range of stakeholders, including governments, civil society and women farmers, who played a strong leadership role. In 2015, the Programme identified and supported agriculture adaptation projects in over 120 districts in six countries[2] and is expected to reach 170,000 households in its initial phase.

17. At the eleventh Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme Partnership Platform, held in March 2015 in Johannesburg, South Africa, the NEPAD Agency launched the Programme results framework to track, assess and report on progress towards implementation of the Malabo Declaration commitments. To further monitoring and accountability, NEPAD supported eight countries[3] to establish national strategic analysis knowledge support systems as a means of strengthening data, monitoring and evaluation. In addition, agriculture joint sector reviews were undertaken in seven countries[4] to assess mechanisms and practices.

18. In 2015, the NEPAD Agency also supported Cabo Verde, the Gambia and Senegal in conducting agriculture food insecurity risks mapping analyses and helped to integrate risk calculations into their national agriculture and food security investment plans, as well as their national development plans. In addition, NEPAD developed a strategies on fish post-harvest losses for Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali and Togo, aligning those strategies with the Malabo Declaration and the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa.

19. With regard to strengthening private sector engagement in Africa's agricultural sector, the NEPAD Agency supported Botswana, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone and South Africa in strengthening their agribusiness chambers, including through institutional assessments of national agribusiness chambers in the respective countries.

20. While Africa has made noteworthy progress in implementing the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme and Maputo commitments, countries continue to face inadequate financial support in the agriculture sector, a lack of capacity-building and policy coordination, and difficulty in translating political commitments into concrete actions.

C. Health

21. Health remains a key priority for African countries. The outbreak of the Ebola virus disease in 2014 strongly underscored the need to increase investment to strengthen the continent's health-care systems. African governments have made strong commitments in the area of health, including under the Abuja Declaration on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Related Infectious Diseases, in which they

[2] Cameroon, Ethiopia, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria and Rwanda.

[3] Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal, Togo and Zambia.

[4] Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Mozambique, Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania.

committed themselves to allocating at least 15 per cent of annual national budgets to the improvement of the health sector.

22. During the review period, the NEPAD Agency improved access to high-quality essential medicines through its African medicines regulatory harmonization programme, within the framework of the African Union Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan for Africa and the Road Map for Shared Responsibility and Global Solidarity for the AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Response in Africa. The African Union Commission and the Pan African Parliament spearheaded the development of a draft model law on medical products regulation and harmonization in Africa, in order to facilitate a systematic approach to developing legislation on medical products regulation in support of local production of pharmaceuticals.

23. Through the African medicines regulatory harmonization programme, in September 2014 the East African Community adopted harmonized technical requirements for the regulation of medicines which entered into effect in January 2015. As a result of the harmonization, two antimalarial drugs and three reproductive health drugs were jointly reviewed and accepted by the World Health Organization (WHO) and East African Community in less than a year. This is 30 to 40 per cent faster than the average prequalification process for generic medicines, which significantly reduced costs and registration timelines.

24. The NEPAD Agency and the African Academy of Sciences also made progress towards the establishment of a funding platform for the health research and innovations in Africa initiative, with the aim of improving health-care delivery by generating solutions to the health challenges identified in the Africa Health Strategy: 2007-2015.

25. In the context of the fight against Ebola, the NEPAD Agency contributed to the African regulators and ethics committees process on the phase III clinical trials of vaccines against Ebola, convened by WHO in December 2014. To operationalize the agreed steps, in February 2015, the NEPAD Agency and the West African Health Organization of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) convened a follow-up process of African regulators and ethics committees in Accra.

26. The African Union response to the Ebola outbreak was broad and comprehensive, including the establishment of the African Union Support to the Ebola Outbreak in West Africa mission and the provision of increased funding to expand the mandate of the African Union Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine in Africa to include public health emergencies. The African Union also took steps towards the establishment of the African Centre for Disease Control and Prevention.

27. Despite progress, the Ebola outbreak illustrates the multitude of challenges facing health systems on the continent, including insufficient financial resources, a shortage of adequately trained health workers and lack of coordination among various related sectors.

D. Education and training

28. African countries continued to pursue global and continental commitments relating to education, including the Millennium Development Goals on universal primary education and gender equality in education, the Dakar Framework for

Action on Education for All and the NEPAD Agency's Education for All in Africa initiative.

29. During the reporting period, the NEPAD Agency promoted training and educational interventions that strengthened health care, including through the establishment of a training and development centre for teachers of science, mathematics and technology, as well as the Nursing and Midwifery Education in Africa programme, which was implemented in Cameroon, Gabon and the Republic of the Congo.

30. The NEPAD Agency also supported education and training programmes in agriculture. The Continental Framework for Agriculture Education and Training established agriculture education and training knowledge hubs with the aim of ensuring that, by 2016, more than 300,000 farmers in Ethiopia, Niger and Uganda will be equipped with agriculture and food insecurity risk management tools.

31. In June 2015, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Senegal launched the Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund, which will aid the World Bank in its "Partnership for skills in applied science, engineering and technology" programme to award 10,000 African PhD scholarships in a span of 10 years.

32. While most African countries are on track to meet the Millennium Development Goal target of universal primary school enrolment, the continent's completion rates are relatively low, illustrating the need for a consistent and sustainable allocation of resources, improvement of learning and teaching conditions, and strengthening of teachers' professional development.

E. Environment and tourism

33. Since the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, African countries have committed themselves to integrating environmental sustainability into development planning, a commitment that was reaffirmed in the outcomes of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, the 2005 World Summit and the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

34. During the reporting period, African countries and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment strengthened their efforts to implement the NEPAD Environment Initiative. In the first phase of the NEPAD Climate Change Fund, implementation commenced on 11 projects in 10 African countries in the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa region, addressing challenges such as climate change adaptation in agriculture, biodiversity conservation and the mainstreaming of climate change into national agricultural investment plans.

35. As of December 2014, 27 African countries have engaged in sustainable land and water management investment planning and 12 countries have completed their country strategic investment frameworks. The NEPAD Agency provided technical support to 16 countries in that regard. Through the implementation of sustainable land and water management practices, Ethiopia, Gambia, Kenya and Togo successfully increased the number of hectares of land that are sustainably managed, enabling an increase in the number of land users.

36. In 2015, the Africa Climate Smart Agriculture Coordination Platform was established with the aim of having at least 25 million African farm households practising climate smart agriculture by 2025, through the use of training and increased access to climate smart agriculture technologies, inputs and tools. The NEPAD Agency is currently undertaking a stocktaking and appraisal of climate smart agriculture programmes in Ethiopia, which are expected to reach over 200,000 households over a 3-year period.

37. Those efforts notwithstanding, African countries continue to face significant impediments in relation to the environment, including inadequate capacity for climate change adaptation and lack of access to adaptive technology.

F. Information and communications technology

38. During the period under review, the NEPAD Agency continued to support African countries in the development of information and communications technology (ICT). Actions focused on the four pillars of the NEPAD e-Africa Programme, namely: (a) information and communications technology infrastructure; (b) capacity development; (c) e-applications and services; and (d) an enabling environment and governance.

39. In 2014, under the NEPAD e-Africa Programme, several regional broadband studies were completed and the broadband component of the Africa infrastructure database of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa was updated. In West and Central Africa, the studies provided regulatory gap analysis, as well as network design and business cases for regional networks. As a result of the promotion of broadband strategies under the programme, most African countries now have national broadband plans, many have implemented national fibre-optic backbones and 23 out of 54 African countries now have national Internet exchange points.

40. In addition, the NEPAD Agency conducted fact-finding missions in 32 African countries and used the data collected to establish a database of broadband fibre-optic links. A corresponding information system has been established, with access granted to all stakeholders and ICT professionals across the continent.

41. In September 2014, the NEPAD Agency also facilitated the development of a training curriculum for African stakeholders on Internet governance and ICT policy, which brought together participants from all five regions of the continent. In addition, under the e-Africa Programme dialogue on Internet policy was successfully supported through forums such as the African Internet Governance Forum and the global Internet Governance Forum.

42. Despite progress, barriers to ICT development persist, including limited infrastructure, high costs associated with relevant technologies and regulatory frameworks and limited institutional capacity.

G. Science, technology and innovation

43. The NEPAD Agency continued its work in science, technology and innovation through the implementation of its Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of

Action, which has two main areas of focus: (a) research and development; and (b) mechanisms to improve policy and promote technological innovation.

44. During the reporting period, the NEPAD Agency commenced implementation of the Science, Technology, and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2024, which was adopted in June 2014 at the twenty-third Summit of the African Union. The Strategy's priorities are a core part of Agenda 2063, which highlights the importance of science, technology and innovation for various priorities, including food security, the environment, water and energy.

45. Under the African Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators initiative, the NEPAD Agency strengthened the quality of research and development on the continent and expanded the scope of indicators to better inform policymaking. The current phase of the programme addresses emerging issues that require empirical evidence, including the integration of science, technology and innovation, health and education indicators into the assessment process of the African Peer Review Mechanism.

46. In 2015, the NEPAD Agency secured €6 million and €1.19 million from Finland and South Africa, respectively, to support bioscience activities in the Southern Africa region through the NEPAD Southern Africa Network for Biosciences. Through the NEPAD African networks of water centres of excellence, additional funding of €6 million was secured from the European Union (EU) to support capacity development, research and innovation in water and sanitation in the Southern and West Africa regions.

47. During the review period, the NEPAD Agency developed and implemented an information technology system for managing research grants, and established an alliance for acceleration of the sciences in Africa which will serve as a platform for supporting health research in Africa.

H. Gender mainstreaming, empowerment of women and civil society participation

48. African governments have made several commitments relating to gender equality and women's empowerment, including in the context of the 2003 Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, the 2004 Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, the African Union Gender Policy and the African Women's Decade (2010-2020).

49. In recognition of the important role of women and girls, at the 24th African Union Summit, in January 2015, 2015 was declared the Year of Women's Empowerment and Development. Furthermore, at the 25th African Union Summit, in June 2015, 2016 was declared the African Year of Human Rights, with particular focus on the rights of women.

50. Through the NEPAD-Spanish Fund for African Women Empowerment, the NEPAD Agency disbursed 25 grants in 2014, providing 500,000 euros to women's economic empowerment projects in Africa, including support for small and medium-sized enterprises. The Fund supported the establishment of microcredit schemes in eight African countries,[5] providing low-interest loans to more than 8,000 women,

[5] Burkina Faso, Gambia, Guinea, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Senegal, South Africa and Togo.

and also provided training to over 3,000 women entrepreneurs in small business management and enterprise development. In addition, the Fund financed training for women and men on gender-based violence prevention, as well as for the creation of a legal handbook and manual entitled "A guide to using the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa for legal action", aimed at helping countries ratify and implement the Protocol on the Rights of Women across the continent.

51. The NEPAD Agency provided financing and agricultural education assistance to approximately 2,300 women in Angola, Cameroon, Guinea, Mozambique and South Sudan to strengthen their agricultural production and facilitate their efforts in commercial agro-processing. The Agency also provided agricultural assistance to 8,452 women in eight countries,[6] providing extension services, training, seeds and other inputs related to crop diversification, as well as support for the construction and maintenance of irrigation systems.

52. In spite of those achievements, progress towards women empowerment faces a number of challenges, including lack of financing and the limited capacity of recipient organizations. Furthermore, high rates of poverty and illiteracy, coupled with persistent discrimination in the economic, social and political sectors, hinder overall progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment in African countries.

I. African Peer Review Mechanism

53. The African Peer Review Mechanism is a mutually agreed self-monitoring instrument established by the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee in 2003 to strengthen governance and sustainable development in the areas of democracy and political governance, economic governance and management, corporate governance, and socioeconomic development.

54. During the review period, the African Peer Review Mechanism continued to strengthen political, economic and corporate governance.[7] In January 2015, Côte d'Ivoire joined the Mechanism, increasing its membership to 35 countries, namely: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia. As of June 2015, 17 of its member countries have been peer-reviewed.

55. In 2014, the NEPAD Agency, in collaboration with the African Union Commission, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the African Peer Review Mechanism secretariat, finalized the design of the NEPAD governance implementation framework to support the accelerated implementation of national programmes of action in African Peer Review Mechanism-reviewed countries. The Agency conducted in-depth evaluations on facilitating accelerated implementation of such programmes in 15 African Peer Review Mechanism-reviewed countries.

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[6] Angola, Cameroon, Gambia, Guinea, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and South Sudan.

[7] See the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/70/176-S/2015/560).

56. In March 2015, the African Peer Review Mechanism held a joint seminar with OECD, in which the two organizations shared experience relating to governance review processes, their respective peer review systems and areas of possible cooperation.

57. The African Peer Review Mechanism also conducted several regional workshops in collaboration with the regional economic communities, with the aim of increasing knowledge of the African Peer Review Mechanism at both community secretariat level and in countries in each region. Workshops were successfully held in the Economic Community of Central African States region in May 2014 and in the Southern African Development Community region in May 2015.

58. Although the African Peer Review Mechanism has made commendable progress, over half of its member States have not yet engaged in the review process for various reasons, including capacity constraints that hinder implementation of resource-intensive and technically demanding African Peer Review Mechanism processes. Efforts are under way to fast-track implementation where the African Peer Review Mechanism process has stalled.

III. Response of the international community: building on the momentum of international support for Africa's development

A. Introduction

59. Given Africa's integration into the world economy, the global economic environment has considerable influence on the continent's development in general and on the implementation of the NEPAD agenda. During the review period, Africa's GDP growth was a subdued 3.9 per cent in 2014, a slight decrease from 4 per cent growth in 2013. This was largely a result of flagging import markets in advanced countries and emerging economies. The decline in exports more than offset growth in domestic demand. The continent's vulnerability to commodity price volatility heightens the need for further progress towards diversification and structural transformation — key development priorities recognized in Agenda 2063.

60. The United States, in August 2014, held the first-ever United States-Africa Summit on the theme "Investing in the next generation". The Summit, which was attended by representatives of government, the private sector and civil society, centred on how to encourage progress in various priority areas, including expanding trade and investment ties, engaging young African leaders and expanding cooperation on peace and security.

61. The Group of Twenty (G-20) Summit, held in Brisbane, Australia in November 2014, addressed various issues of importance to Africa, including raising investment and productivity in food systems through the G-20 Food Security and Nutrition Framework, and reducing the global average cost of transferring remittances.

62. In follow-up to the 2014 European Union-Africa Summit, the seventh European Commission-African Union Commission College-to-College Meeting, convened in Belgium in April 2015, addressed how best to implement the Africa-European Union Joint Strategy and its road map. In a joint declaration, African and European countries welcomed the adoption of Agenda 2063 and reaffirmed their

commitment to strengthening trade and investment between the two continents, as well as cooperation on peace and security.

63. The Group of Seven (G-7) Summit, held in Bavaria, Germany in June 2015, reaffirmed commitment to supporting Africa's development, to jointly mobilizing $100 billion a year in climate financing by 2020 and to making the Green Climate Fund fully operational in 2015. Member countries specifically highlighted the need to accelerate access to renewable energy in Africa by 2020. The Group outlined its aim of improving sustainable energy access in Africa and reaching up to 10,000 MW in additional installed renewables capacity by 2020. With regard to the Ebola crisis, the members of the Group committed themselves to assisting at least 60 countries over the next five years, including the countries of West Africa.

64. The Third International Conference on Financing for Development, held in July 2015, culminated in the adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, in which, inter alia, the importance of addressing the diverse needs and challenges faced by countries in special situations, in particular African countries. Member States also reaffirmed the need to achieve positive socioeconomic transformation in Africa and, in that regard, reaffirmed the importance of supporting NEPAD, Agenda 2063 and its First 10-Year Implementation Plan.

B. Official development assistance

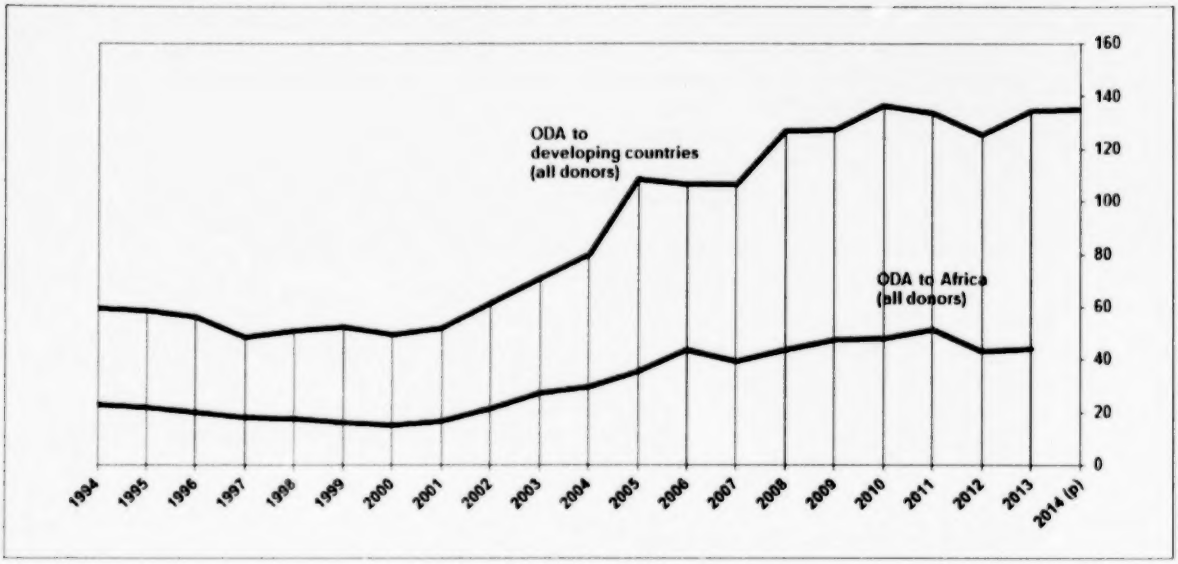
65. In the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, official development assistance (ODA) providers reaffirmed commitments to achieving the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income (GNI) as ODA and the target of 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of GNI as ODA for least developed countries. ODA providers were also encouraged to consider setting a target to provide at least 0.20 per cent of GNI as ODA to least developed countries.

66. According to preliminary OECD data, total net ODA from Development Assistance Committee countries to developing countries totalled about $135.2 billion in 2014, representing a slight increase of 0.7 per cent from 2013 levels (see graph below). According to the latest available data,[8] ODA flows to Africa fell from $47.7 billion in 2012 to $44.4 billion in 2013. Africa's share of global ODA also fell during that period. In addition, total aid to least developed countries was approximately $47.3 billion in 2013, an increase from the approximately $43 billion received in 2012.

[8] OECD is finalizing calculations of total official development assistance to Africa and least developed countries in 2014.

Total official development assistance from all donors

(Billions of current United States dollars)



Source: OECD/Development Assistance Committee online database, 2015.

67. On aid effectiveness, the international community's progress has been mixed, with more efforts needed to implement the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation commitments on aid untying, transparency and predictability. Most African countries, however, have made progress in delivering on their commitments, including through improving their national development strategies and strengthening public financial management.

68. With respect to the United Nations target of 0.7 per cent of GNI as ODA, progress remains limited. Based on preliminary OECD data for 2014, the average ODA/GNI of the OECD DAC countries declined from 0.30 per cent in 2013 to 0.29 per cent in 2014. Only five countries met the target: Denmark, Luxembourg, Norway, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

69. At a high-level meeting of the OECD DAC, convened in Paris in December 2014, DAC agreed, inter alia, to develop a new statistical measure with the working title of "Total official support for sustainable development. The new measure, which will complement the ODA measure, will potentially cover the totality of resource flows extended to developing countries and multilateral institutions in support of sustainable development and originating from official sources and interventions, regardless of the types of instruments used and associated terms. OECD members agreed to decide on the ultimate parameters of the measure once the post-2015 development agenda has been agreed upon.

C. Debt relief

70. The international community has committed itself to helping to address the debt problems of developing countries, including in Africa, through the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative, as well as at the bilateral level. In the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, Member States pledged to continue to support the remaining HIPC-eligible countries and expressed the possibility of exploring, on a case-by-case basis, initiatives to support non-HIPC countries to address debt sustainability.

Current and potential beneficiaries of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (as of June 2015)

Status	*Countries*
30 post-completion point countries	Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia
3 pre-decision point countries	Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan

Source: International Monetary Fund.

71. As of June 2015, 30 African countries have reached the post-completion point and continue to receive full debt relief. In April 2015, Chad reached the HIPC completion point and was therefore granted $1.1 billion in total debt relief.

72. Three other countries, namely, Eritrea, Somalia and the Sudan, have remained in the pre-decision phase. In the case of Eritrea, the last International Monetary Fund (IMF) Article IV Consultation took place in 2009 and there has been no discussion of an IMF-supported programme. With the support of the Work Bank and IMF, the External Debt Technical Working Group has been established to tackle the accumulated arrears and debt of Somalia and to ensure that the country builds up a credible track record of economic reforms. Although Somalia is ineligible to receive financial assistance from IMF or the Work Bank owing to its longstanding arrears, both institutions have been providing the country with technical assistance and capacity-building support. The Sudan still remains in arrears to IMF, the World Bank and AfDB.

73. In March 2014, IMF approved a new staff-monitored programme for the Sudan covering the period January-December 2014 with the aim of helping the authorities to build up a track record of cooperation with IMF, which should aid in securing timely support for arrears clearance and debt relief. Eritrea, Somalia and the Sudan face common challenges related to peace, security and governance, and will require continued support to strengthen their policies and institutions.

74. With respect to debt sustainability, Africa's public debt-to-GDP is lower today than it has been in decades and overall fiscal policies are sustainable in most

countries. Debt levels on the continent are comparable to those of other developing countries and below that of advanced economies.

D. Foreign direct investment and other private flows

75. Noting the importance of foreign direct investment (FDI) as a vital complement to national development efforts, in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, Member States pledged to encourage investment promotion and prioritize projects with the greatest potential for promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all, structural transformation, sustainable industrialization, productive diversification and agriculture. In addition, following the 2015 G-20 Summit commitment to take measures to reduce the average cost of remittance transfers to 5 per cent of the amount transferred, in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda Member States agreed to work to reduce the average cost to less than 3 per cent by 2030.

76. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development *World Investment Report 2015*, FDI inflows to Africa declined slightly from $55 billion in 2013 to $54 billion in 2014. North Africa saw its FDI flows decline by 15 per cent to $12 billion, while flows to sub-Saharan Africa increased by 5 per cent to $42 billion. In sub-Saharan Africa, FDI flows to West Africa declined by 10 per cent to $13 billion owing to factors such as the impact of Ebola on Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, regional conflicts and falling commodity prices. In addition, the services share in FDI flows to Africa remained lower than the global and the developing country averages, with flows concentrated in extractive industry sectors in resource-rich countries on the continent.

77. During the review period, African countries took specific steps to attract FDI and enhance private sector engagement. According to the World Bank Group's *Ease of Doing Business Report 2015*, the continent accounted for 5 of the top 10 improvers in the world in 2013/14. In addition, sub-Saharan Africa accounted for the largest number of regulatory reforms aimed at making it easier to do business, with more than 70 per cent of its economies carrying out at least one such reform. The report highlighted key regional actions in that regard, including the revision of the Uniform Act on Commercial Companies and Economic Interest Groups by the Council of Ministers of the Organization for the Harmonization of Business Law in Africa. The revised Uniform Act includes provisions on the introduction of new corporate structures and types of securities, as well as additional regulations relating to corporate governance.

E. Trade

78. In the Addis Ababa Action Agenda the international community was urged to increase its support to projects and cooperation frameworks that enhance the participation and integration of small-scale industrial and other enterprises in global value chains and markets and foster regional and subregional integration, paying special attention to Africa.

79. According to the World Trade Organization (WTO), the dollar value of exports from Africa fell 7.6 per cent in 2014, owing to a sharp fall in commodity prices.

80. At the G-7 Summit in Germany strong support was expressed for the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. Moreover, the G-7 underlined the importance of implementing the "Bali Package", particularly in relation to least developed countries. The G-7 also reiterated the importance of delivering a work programme by July 2015 to ensure the success of the Tenth WTO Ministerial Conference, to be held in Nairobi in December 2015.

81. In June 2015, in the United States, the Trade Preference Extension Act of 2015 was signed into law, enacting a 10-year renewal of the African Growth and Opportunity Act, a non-reciprocal trade preference programme that provides duty-free treatment for United States imports of certain products from eligible sub-Saharan African countries. As of April 2015, 39 African countries were eligible for the preference benefits.

82. The Fifth Global Review of the Aid for Trade Initiative, held in Geneva in July 2015 on reducing trade costs for inclusive sustainable growth, focused on how to help developing countries, particularly least developed countries, to build the infrastructure and capacity needed to connect to regional and global markets and improve their trade performance. The Review also considered ways to embed trade costs at the centre of the Aid for Trade initiative, so as to strengthen developing countries' competitiveness and their ability to connect to regional and global value chains.

F. South-South cooperation

83. South-South and triangular cooperation continued to be an important driver of Africa's development in all sectors, serving as a complement to North-South cooperation.

84. In November 2014, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation organized the Global South-South Development Expo in Nairobi, the opening session of which was on the theme "Responding to Ebola as a development crisis". Participants from China, Cuba, the Gambia, Nigeria, the Russian Federation, South Africa and Uganda shared relevant experiences and best practices, and also advocated for an integrated response to the epidemic, stressing the importance of the global South in helping to end the crisis. Several African countries, including Uganda and Nigeria, also assisted their neighbours during the crisis, providing financial and human resources to help stop the outbreak.

85. At the sixth summit of BRICS countries (Brazil, Russian Federation, India, China and South Africa), held in Fortaleza and Brasilia, Brazil, in July 2014, the following were adopted: the Fortaleza Declaration and Action Plan; the Agreement on the New Development Bank; the Treaty for the Establishment of a BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement; and agreements among BRICS development banks and export credit insurance agencies". The New Development Bank is intended to mobilize resources and provide technical assistance for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS and other developing countries.

86. In April 2015, in Jakarta and Bandung, Indonesia, representatives of Asian and African countries met at an African-Asian Conference summit on the theme "Strengthening South-South cooperation to promote world peace and prosperity". At the summit, which commemorated the sixtieth anniversary of the 1955 Asian-

African Conference and the tenth anniversary of the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership, countries reaffirmed their commitment to South-South cooperation and pledged to strengthen cooperation between the two continents. They also agreed to redouble efforts to promote trade and investment flows between the two regions.

87. The Bandung Message to Strengthen South-South Cooperation and the Declaration on Reinvigorating the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership, which were adopted at the conclusion of the summit, both aim to nurture strong relations between the two regions.

IV. Support provided by the United Nations system

A. General

88. The United Nations system is one of the main pillars of international support for the implementation of NEPAD. Support by its entities at the regional, subregional and national levels took various forms, ranging from technical assistance, capacity-building and funding to advocacy and normative work. The most recent report by the Secretary-General on United Nations system support for NEPAD (E/AC.51/2015/10) contains detailed information on the nature and scope of the support provided during the past year.

89. In October 2014, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat collaborated with AUC, the regional economic communities, the NEPAD Agency and APRM to convene Africa Week 2014 at United Nations Headquarters in New York, on the theme "The Africa we want: support of the United Nations system to the AU Agenda 2063". The week, in which representatives of Member States, United Nations system entities, the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders participated, featured a range of high-level events aimed at galvanizing support for NEPAD and the priority sectors of Agenda 2063.

90. The United Nations also made significant efforts to assist in the fight against Ebola during the reporting period, in partnership with the Governments of the affected countries and other global and regional partners. The Secretary-General launched the Ebola recovery assessment process through UNDP, in close collaboration with the African Union, ECOWAS and the Mano River Union and in consultation with the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, ECA and other United Nations partners.

91. In September 2014, the United Nations established the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response, which has redeployed financial, logistical and human resources to Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The Secretary-General also appointed the Special Envoy on Ebola and established the Global Ebola Response Coalition, comprising organizations that provide strategic coordination of the Ebola response.

92. In July 2015, the Secretary-General convened the International Ebola Recovery Conference to galvanize the international community to make targeted investments to support recovery in the three most affected countries and the Mano River subregion.

B. Strengthening of the Regional Coordination Mechanism of United Nations agencies and organizations working in Africa in support of the African Union, its New Partnership for Africa's Development and the cluster system

93. During the review period, the United Nations system took several steps to strengthen the nine clusters of the Regional Coordination Mechanism and their subclusters, as well as to enhance overall United Nations support to the African Union and its organs.

94. At the 16th session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism, held in Addis Ababa in March 2015 on the theme "United Nations system support for the African Union's 2015 Year of Women's Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063", participants discussed cluster achievements and assessed progress and constraints in gender mainstreaming within the Regional Coordination Mechanism. They also underscored the importance of developing a communication strategy as well as a monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the implementation of the clusters.

95. In order to adapt to the changing global landscape and the continent's evolving priorities, the participants in the sixteenth session considered the potential reconfiguration of the clusters, taking into account budgetary and capacity requirements as well as relevant African Union Commission strategic frameworks, such as Agenda 2063 and its first 10-year Implementation Plan.

96. Regarding the African Union-United Nations partnership, progress was made during the reporting period towards establishing the Partnership on Africa's Integration and Development Agenda, which was endorsed in June 2015 by the twenty-fifth African Union Summit as a successor to the Ten-Year Capacity-building Programme for the African Union.

C. Millennium Villages Project

97. During the review period, the Millennium Villages Project continued to contribute towards the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in 10 African countries,[c] reaching over half a million people in villages across the region, particularly in the areas of health, food production, education, water access and essential infrastructure.

98. In line with its core priorities for 2013-2015, the Millennium Villages Project has focused on the establishment of transition plans and agreements with local governments to take over project interventions. The 2013 Millennium Promise Annual Report on the Millennium Villages Project, which was published on 4 February 2015, provided a review of monitoring and evaluation activities, an update on scale-up and sustainability initiatives, and a review of major partnerships. The project has also embarked on extensive data collection in 2015, with the aim of publishing a comprehensive evaluation of the project by mid-2016.

[c] Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

99. The seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, and the prospective adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, along with the adoption by the African Union of Agenda 2063, provide an important opportunity to reflect on our collective efforts towards Africa's development and to pursue a stronger and more effective partnership between Africa and its development partners.

100. African countries have made progress on all of the NEPAD thematic priorities, including through strengthening the financing and implementation of major infrastructure projects, progressing towards implementation of CAADP commitments, strengthening regional and national health systems to respond to global pandemics, improving gender mainstreaming, and working towards climate adaptation in agriculture and other sectors. Progress was also made with regard to APRM, which strengthened its role as a platform for promoting good governance on the continent.

101. The international community also strengthened its support for Africa, particularly through debt relief, efforts to expand trade with the continent, as well as through improved cooperation from both traditional and new and emerging development partners in priority NEPAD sectors such as health, gender equality and women's empowerment, and science, technology and innovation. Progress was also made with regard to United Nations support for Africa, including through ongoing efforts to strengthen the Regional Coordination Mechanism cluster system and establish the Partnership on Africa's Integration and Development Agenda as a successor to the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union.

102. As NEPAD reaches the midway point of its second decade and Africa embarks on the post-2015 development agenda and on its ambitious Agenda 2063, it is important that the continent extend, build upon and maximize partnerships in the areas of financing, technology transfer and institutional and human capacity development, including through strengthened partnerships with traditional development partners and South-South and triangular cooperation.

103. While the continent's growth remains strong, its narrow bases and high dependence on commodities render it vulnerable to terms of trade shocks. This heightens the need for urgent measures to promote the diversification and structural transformation of African economies. The strong emphasis on industrialization and diversification as key aspirations of Agenda 2063 is welcome and should catalyse efforts towards broader diversification of African economies.

104. In order to strengthen gender equality and women's empowerment on the continent, African countries should prioritize education for women and girls and ensure equal enrolment in primary, secondary and tertiary education and vocational training, as well as gender parity in completion rates. Attention should also be paid to improving employment, decent work and entrepreneurship opportunities for women and girls, including through targeted business development policies and increased provision of financing and technology.

105. **In addition, the international community should consider supporting African women and girls through targeted means of implementation, including financing, technology transfer and capacity-building, as well as by ensuring that their priorities are mainstreamed throughout the goals, targets and indicators of the post-2015 development agenda.**

106. **Concerning financing for development, in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which recognizes the importance of domestic resource mobilization in financing for development, it is critical that African countries strengthen domestic resource mobilization, build regional capital markets and financial institutions, and reverse the illicit flows of capital from the continent. International support will be key to those efforts, including financial, technological and capacity-building support to strengthen relevant institutional capacities.**

107. **As intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda enter their final stages before the United Nations Summit in September 2015, particular consideration should be given to Africa's development priorities as articulated in the Common African Position on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, as well as in Agenda 2063 and its First 10-Year Implementation Plan, including with respect to means of implementation. Efforts must also be made to ensure synergy and coherence in the implementation of both agendas.**

108. **With regard to the post-2015 development agenda, monitoring and evaluation will be key for measuring progress and ensuring the implementation of all commitments made towards its achievement, particularly with respect to Africa. In this context, the United Nations monitoring mechanism, established by the General Assembly in its resolution 66/293, will play an important role in monitoring the implementation of commitments made towards Africa's development by African countries and their development partners.**

109. **In view of the importance of regional infrastructure for Africa's development, African countries should strengthen investment efforts by allocating greater resources to regional efforts, continuing regulatory reform processes and enhancing cross-border initiatives in the context of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa and the Dakar Agenda for Action.**

110. **Africa's development partners should complement those efforts through increased financial support, technical assistance and capacity-building, particularly in support of the 16 priority projects identified in the Dakar Agenda for Action and the relevant flagship projects identified in the Agenda 2063 First 10-Year Implementation Plan. Partners should also strengthen early-stage project preparation support to Africa, including through increased support for the NEPAD Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility.**

111. **While the continent has made noteworthy efforts towards its agricultural development, its share of the global agriculture market remains extremely small. African countries should further prioritize agriculture in their budgets, with the aim of achieving the target of allocating 10 per cent of national budgets to the sector and exceeding the target of 6 per cent annual growth in agricultural productivity, as well as value addition through mechanized agriculture. In addition, development partners should take steps to increase**

African farmers' access to markets; reduce or phase out trade-distorting subsidies for agricultural products and other trade barriers at the national and global levels; and increase financing to African agriculture.

112. The recent outbreak of Ebola in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone highlights the need for stronger health systems across the continent and the importance of global cooperation in the health sector. Preventing future outbreaks will require a combination of global, regional and national interventions that include strengthening health sectors across the region, the creation of a regional centre for disease control and prevention, and the establishment of early warning systems and resilience-creating mechanisms.

113. With regard to environmental sustainability, climate financing should be strengthened, with an emphasis on improving the balance between mitigation, adaptation and technology financing. Prompt initial capitalization of the Green Climate Fund is of particular importance for African countries.

114. The continued delay of the Doha Round of trade negotiations has been a significant setback for African trade and has hindered the efficacy of the continent's structural reforms. Therefore, every effort should be made to conclude the Doha Round, as well as to build upon the success of the Ninth WTO Ministerial Conference, held in Bali, Indonesia in 2013, including with respect to trade facilitation, agriculture and the development of least developed countries.

115. In support of Africa's implementation of increasingly ambitious global and regional development agendas, development partners should meet their ODA commitments and strengthen ODA allocation to the continent.

116. In view of the significant role of the regional economic communities in the implementation of the Agenda 2063 First 10-Year Plan, the international community, including the United Nations, should strengthen its engagement with and support for those communities in all areas of development, peace and security, including through technical and institutional capacity-building.

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New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

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Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/291 to review progress made in the implementation of the recommendations contained in the 1998 report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/52/871-S/1998/318).

This report takes stock of major peace and security developments in Africa during the past year and highlights the growing linkages between political, social and economic exclusion and violent conflict. Countering this trend will require inclusive people-centred approaches in the promotion of peace, security and socioeconomic development, as emphasized in the African Union's Agenda 2063 and its first 10-Year Implementation Plan.

Consistent with the mandate of General Assembly resolution 69/291 to develop policy proposals on emerging challenges, and in line with the aspiration of the African Union's Agenda 2063 for "An Africa of Good Governance, Democracy, Respect for Human Rights, Justice and Rule of Law", the report addresses the role of regional and subregional organizations in promoting democratic governance in Africa. It concludes with recommendations for strengthening the institutional capacities of regional and subregional organizations and for enhancing their cooperation with the United Nations and other partners in the promotion of democratic governance in Africa.

* A/70/150.

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I. Introduction

1. In 1998, following a request from the Security Council (S/PRST/1997/46), my predecessor undertook a comprehensive analysis of the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. The subsequent report (A/52/871-S/1998/318) proposed specific measures aimed at reducing conflict, building durable peace and promoting sustainable development in Africa.

2. In 2009, the General Assembly, in resolution 63/304, requested me to submit a report reviewing the status of implementation of the recommendations contained in the 1998 report. I issued a review report (A/65/152-S/2010/526) outlining the progress made, identifying persistent and emerging challenges facing Africa, as well as providing recommendations and proposals for a renewed engagement with Africa.

3. The review report highlighted that while "Africa has made substantial progress in building democratic governance, encouraging pluralism and strengthening the role of parliaments and civil society, ... not all countries have embraced these principles" (ibid., para. 41). The African Union equally reflects this outlook in its Shared Values Agenda, which underscores the importance of democratic governance for strengthening relations between governments and their peoples based on human rights, rule of law, accountability, transparency, popular participation, gender equality and inclusive development. Democratic governance thus constitutes one of the eight priorities of the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration of the Organization of African Unity/African Union and one of the seven aspirations of the Union's Agenda 2063.

4. In the above context, the present report has been prepared in consultation with the African Union, the regional economic communities and the United Nations system through the Interdepartmental Task Force on African Affairs, chaired by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa. Following the introduction in section I, section II provides an update of major peace and security developments in Africa. Section III takes stock of key actions and initiatives undertaken by the United Nations system from July 2014 to June 2015 to implement the recommendations of the review report. The thematic section IV addresses the role of regional and subregional organizations in democratic governance in Africa. Lastly, section V contains conclusions and recommendations to enhance the critical partnership between Africa and the United Nations.

II. The year in review

5. Since my last report, Africa has made remarkable progress in defining its vision for "an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven and managed by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena".[1] At its twenty-fourth summit, held in Addis Ababa in January 2015, the African Union adopted Agenda 2063 as its 50-year transformative agenda for peace, security and development. The African Union Assembly also declared 2015 the "Year of Women's Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063", reaffirming the important role of women and girls in driving the implementation of Agenda 2063.

[1] Preamble to the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration, adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union on 26 May 2013.

6. African countries and the regional economic communities are expected to align their development plans with Agenda 2063 and its first 10-Year Implementation Plan (2014-2023), which was adopted by the twenty-fifth African Union summit in South Africa in June 2015. The international community is also expected to further enhance its support to Africa in the implementation of Agenda 2063 and its first 10-Year Implementation Plan. I welcome the historic adoption of this agenda, which coincides with the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations.

7. Africa progressed overall in boosting economic growth, improving governance and elections management, preventing and resolving conflicts, combating terrorism and violent extremism, and responding to disease outbreak. African regional and subregional organizations and the international community, including the United Nations, supported the efforts of African countries in those areas. Major economic updates are highlighted in my report on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) (A/70/175).

8. On elections management, a number of countries, including Nigeria, Togo and Tunisia, showed improvements in the management of electoral processes. Challenges remain in preventing and mitigating election-related violence, which is often a result of lack of confidence in the credibility of the electoral process and election administration, genuine participatory politics, a winner-takes-all approach to elections and ineffective conflict management systems, among others. At the request of Member States, the United Nations provided preventive diplomacy, mediation, advisory or technical support to a number of African countries that undertook elections in the review period.

9. In Burkina Faso, the political situation is evolving following popular protests that led to the resignation of President Blaise Compaoré in October 2014. The Transitional Government under the leadership of President Michel Kafando has made significant progress in implementing elements of the Charter for the Transition. The National Independent Electoral Commission has released the electoral calendar and completed the revision of the electoral register. As the country prepares for presidential and general elections in October 2015, my Special Representative for West Africa will continue to work closely with the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the International Follow-up and Support Group for the Transition in Burkina Faso, to support the full implementation of the Charter for the Transition and the organization of credible elections.

10. In Burundi, a failed coup d'état and public protests against President Nkurunziza's decision to seek a controversial third presidential mandate led to electoral violence and an influx of more than 145,000 refugees into neighbouring countries. Amid heightened tensions, a number of senior government, opposition and civil society representatives went into exile, including the First Vice-President of Burundi, the Vice-President of the Constitutional Court and the Vice-President of the Independent National Electoral Commission. In the light of the ongoing violence and deteriorating human rights situation, the East African Community (EAC), the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, the African Union, the United Nations and other stakeholders called for the postponement of presidential, legislative and local elections to allow for the creation of conditions conducive to the holding of free, peaceful and credible elections. Despite these calls, parliamentary elections took place on 29 June amidst electoral violence and a boycott by the opposition. My Special Envoy and Head of the United Nations Electoral Observation Mission in

Burundi and my Special Envoy and Representative for the Great Lakes Region and Central Africa all worked closely with the African Union, EAC, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and other partners to defuse tensions and support a national dialogue process to find a political solution to the crisis and help to create an environment conducive to peaceful, credible and inclusive elections.

11. Likewise in Somalia, the review of the Provisional Federal Constitution and preparations for elections continue to lag. While legislation authorizing a National Independent Electoral Commission was passed in February 2015 and its commissioners were appointed on 6 July 2015, the secretariat of the Commission is yet to be fully established. At the same time, Somalia made progress regarding peacebuilding and State-building. The formation of federal States continued, as did the deployment of civilian authorities to newly recovered areas. Leaders at the federal and regional levels began a structured dialogue on their relations and agreed on plans for integrating regional militias into the national army. Within the context of the New Deal Compact for Somalia, the Steering Committee of the Somalia Development and Reconstruction Facility approved, in March 2015, $100 million for peacebuilding and State-building programmes. My Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) will continue to support Somali stakeholders to intensify efforts towards the completion of the political process, constitutional referendum and organization of elections planned for 2016, as well as remain engaged in coordinating support for Somalia's stabilization and reconstruction.

12. Mali also made progress in its peace and reconciliation process, although the security situation remains fragile. Continued violence and terrorist attacks, including on civilians, threaten to undermine the peace process. Attacks on international forces, including the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), also increased. The Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali was signed between the Government of Mali and the Coordination of Azawad Movements on 20 June 2015. My Special Representative for Mali is working with partners to support the implementation of the Agreement and facilitate political dialogue and reconciliation through continued good offices. Efforts are also ongoing to strengthen the Mission's capabilities to protect civilians, improve security, assist the re-establishment of state authority in northern Mali and enhance regional security cooperation.

13. In the Central African Republic, the International Contact Group on the Central African Republic established and supported the international mediation process, which culminated in the signing of a cessation of hostilities agreement and formation of a new government in August 2014. In September 2014, the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic (MISCA) transferred authority to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).

14. Building on this momentum, the Bangui Forum for National Reconciliation in the Central African Republic, held in May 2015, adopted the Republican Pact for Peace, National Reconciliation and Reconstruction. The Transitional Government and armed groups also signed an agreement on the principles for disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation and integration. My Special Representatives for Central Africa and the Central African Republic will continue to support efforts to implement the recommendations of the Bangui Forum towards the holding of a constitutional

referendum and the conduct of credible presidential and legislative elections. Furthermore, following the allegations of sexual abuses involving foreign military forces in the Central African Republic, I have launched an independent expert review panel to review and assess the handling by the United Nations of those allegations.

15. Ongoing large-scale violence in South Sudan is undermining peace, stability and economic development in the country. Over 2 million people have been displaced since the crisis broke out in December 2013. Serious human rights violations, including the recruitment of child soldiers and sexual violence against women, persist. The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) provided protection to about 166,000 displaced persons as of July 2015 and continues to provide shelter and assistance to internally displaced persons.

16. My Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan has continued to support peace efforts by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Mediation to achieve a comprehensive settlement of the conflict in South Sudan, in cooperation with my Special Representative for South Sudan and the African Union High Representative on South Sudan. They will sustain these engagements with partners on the mediation process and support national efforts to promote justice, accountability, healing and reconciliation. In this respect, I welcome South Sudan's ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which oblige all parties to respect and uphold the rights of children and women.

17. In the Sudan's Darfur region, the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur remained fraught with challenges, arising from human rights violations, sporadic ethnic tensions and armed confrontations that displaced at least 83,000 persons in the first half of 2015. Amidst discussions of an exit strategy for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the African Union-United Nations Acting Joint Special Representative for Darfur and my Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan are working closely with the African Union High-level Implementation Panel on the mediation process. In the Sudan's South Kordofan and Blue Nile States, my Special Envoy continues to support the efforts of the Implementation Panel to reach a cessation of hostilities and an agreement on security and political arrangements as well as humanitarian access for vulnerable populations.

18. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations, the African Union, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) continue to support the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region. However, persistent mistrust between signatories of the Framework, lack of progress in neutralizing the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), and the slow repatriation of elements of the Mouvement du 23 mars (M23) have undermined the effectiveness of the Framework. Efforts are currently under way to strengthen the governance structures of the Framework. My Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region will remain closely engaged with the team of Special Envoys in coordinating international support for this process.

19. In the period under review, terrorism and violent extremism remained a serious threat to peace and security on the continent. Chad, Egypt, Libya, the Niger, Nigeria, Somalia and Tunisia experienced terrorist attacks. In East Africa, Al-Shabaab perpetrated attacks in Kenya, including an attack on Garissa University College in

April 2015 that killed over 140 students. In Tunisia, the terrorist attack on the tourist hotel near Sousse in June 2015 killed over 30 persons. In Egypt, there were several attacks, including the bombing that killed the Egyptian Prosecutor General.

20. In Libya, the continuing armed violence, political deadlock, impunity and rising criminal and terrorist activities following the emergence of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant have exacerbated the dire security, human rights and humanitarian situation. Other adverse impacts of the crisis include the continued proliferation and trafficking of arms and influx of foreign terrorist fighters. My Special Representative for Libya, together with the International Contact Group for Libya, the African Union and other partners, remains fully engaged in supporting efforts to end the political deadlock and establish an inclusive government of national accord.

21. In Nigeria, Boko Haram continued to conduct deadly attacks on civilians, as well as carry out forced recruitment, abductions and systematic violations against women and children, including the increased use of girls as "human bombs". Boko Haram also expanded its attacks into Cameroon, Chad and the Niger, affecting thousands of innocent civilians and impacting the security, human rights and humanitarian situation throughout the region. In response, the Lake Chad Basin Commission countries launched a multinational joint task force, which has been conducting military operations against Boko Haram. The Task Force has recovered territory held by Boko Haram and rescued a number of abducted women and children. The States members of the Lake Chad Basin Commission and Benin are working with the African Union, the United Nations and other international partners to fully operationalize the Force. While welcoming those vital efforts, the United Nations is also engaging with the concerned countries to address allegations of serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law during some counter-insurgency operations.

22. In addition, the United Nations is in the process of scaling up its humanitarian presence in Boko Haram-affected areas. Persistent insecurity, logistics challenges, lack of access and funding gaps remain major challenges, however. My Special Representatives for Central Africa and West Africa and the Coordinator of the United Nations Response on the Regional Impact of Boko Haram will continue to support national and regional efforts aimed at preventing the expansion of Boko Haram and assisting affected communities.

23. A major setback in the review period was the outbreak of the Ebola virus disease in West Africa that led to extreme human suffering and claimed over 11,000 lives. In the most-affected countries — Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone — the disease crippled health-care capacities and threatened to reverse hard-won political and socioeconomic gains. Its impact was felt globally and was classified as a threat to international peace and security. A number of public and private actors, including the African Union Support to the Ebola Outbreak in West Africa and the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) provided both health and non-health support to the affected countries to stop, treat and prevent the spread of the disease. To help affected countries to fully recover from its impact, I convened the International Ebola Recovery Conference on 10 July 2015 at United Nations Headquarters in New York to ensure sustained international engagement as well as mobilize financial and non-financial resources for longer-term recovery efforts in the affected countries.

Enhanced focus on the nexus between peace, security and development

24. As highlighted in my report on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (A/70/175), Africa recorded strong growth performance in the review period, with an average economic growth rate of 4.6 per cent. However, Africa's growth has, for the most part, not been inclusive and neither created sufficient jobs nor increased income opportunities for the vast majority of the poor, particularly minorities, women and youth. Rather, inequality, poverty and unemployment persist, with potentials to undermine social cohesion, weaken State-society relations and trigger violent conflicts. That underscores the growing need for integrated approaches that address the peace, security, human rights and economic development nexus.

25. I emphasized the importance of such a holistic approach during my visit to the Horn of Africa with the Presidents of the World Bank and the Islamic Development Bank Group (IDBG) in October 2014, accompanied by senior representatives of the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the European Union and IGAD. We pledged collective political support and a major financial assistance package to countries of the region, totalling over $8 billion. The World Bank committed $1.8 billion to, inter alia, boost economic growth and reduce poverty, while the European Union, AfDB and IDBG committed $3.7 billion, $1.8 billion and $1 billion, respectively, in support of peace, stability and economic development.

26. Recognizing the strong nexus between peace, security and development, the General Assembly, in resolution 69/291, welcomed the adoption of the African Union Agenda 2063 as the continent's overarching strategy for future structural transformation in Africa and reaffirmed the importance of supporting Agenda 2063.

III. Implementation of the recommendations contained in the review report

27. The present section highlights recent actions undertaken by the United Nations system to implement the recommendations contained in the 2010 review report of the Secretary-General (A/65/152-S/2010/526).

A. Institutional cooperation

28. Within the context of the Regional Coordination Mechanism, the joint United Nations-African Union Technical Working Group developed the framework for a renewed United Nations/African Union Partnership on Africa's Integration and Development Agenda (PAIDA). PAIDA, which was adopted by the twenty-fifth African Union summit in June 2015, is envisaged to succeed the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union that expires in 2016. PAIDA is anchored in the Union's Agenda 2063 and highlights Africa's priorities that the United Nations is called upon to support in the period from 2017 to 2027. Building on the successes of the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme, which was initiated by my predecessor, the United Nations will continue to utilize the Regional Coordination Mechanism cluster system to better support Africa in the implementation of Agenda 2063 and other global development frameworks, including through PAIDA.

29. Progress was made in implementing the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security. The Security Council

and the African Union Peace and Security Council held their ninth joint consultative meeting in March 2015, which discussed, inter alia, means of enhancing joint cooperation in conflict prevention and crisis management in Africa. At the working level, the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU) and the African Union Peace and Security Department established joint teams to conduct horizon scanning and develop common positions on existing and emerging conflicts. UNOAU and the African Union Department of Political Affairs also developed a joint workplan to enhance cooperation on elections, constitutionalism and political analysis.

B. Conflict prevention and management and peacekeeping

30. On peacekeeping, the United Nations-African Union Joint Task Force on Peace and Security undertook, in September 2014, a lessons learned exercise on transitions from African Union peace support operations to United Nations peacekeeping operations, based on the cases of the Central African Republic and Mali. The exercise highlighted the need for joint action and close collaboration between both organizations throughout the planning stages of a peace operation.

31. In October 2014, I appointed a High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the state of United Nations peace operations in the light of emerging needs. The African Union contributed to this process based on its common African position on the United Nations Review of Peace Operations. In the light of the centrality of Africa for United Nations peace operations, the Panel called for a stronger United Nations-African Union strategic partnership guided by a division of labour that is based on comparative advantages.

32. The United Nations Office to the African Union continued to work closely with the African Union on the operationalization of the African Standby Force (ASF). Exercise Amani Africa II, the main instrument for evaluating the operational readiness of ASF and its rapid deployment capability, is progressing and three of the five regional standby forces are expected to declare their operational readiness before the end of 2015. The Eastern Africa Standby Force has already declared operational readiness.

33. On conflict prevention and management, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the African Union Commission collaborated with ECOWAS and SADC to organize regional consultations that adopted the Accra and Maseru Declarations on the establishment of national infrastructures for peace. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the African Union Commission launched the youth network for a culture of peace in Africa in December 2014. Along with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, UNESCO also participated in the "Children, Not Soldiers" campaign to end the recruitment of child soldiers in South Sudan.

C. Post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery

34. Given that peacebuilding continues to be at the core of the United Nations efforts to assist post-conflict countries in Africa, African countries and regional organizations were actively engaged in the review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture. Africa's active involvement in this process was particularly significant, as all six countries on the agenda of the Peacebuilding

Commission are in Africa and many other African countries benefit from the funds provided by the Peacebuilding Fund.

35. The African Union also developed an African position on the review of the United Nations Peacebuilding Architecture that was presented to the Advisory Group of Experts, containing concrete recommendations for strengthening the performance and impact of the Architecture in Africa. I intend to use the report to further strengthen the capacity of the United Nations to assist post-conflict countries, including African countries, from relapsing back into conflict.

D. Sustained economic growth and sustainable development

36. In line with its Common African Position on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, Agenda 2063 and its first 10-Year Implementation Plan, Africa remained engaged in the ongoing process to formulate the post-2015 development agenda.[2] African States have consistently emphasized the need to ensure complementarity and synergies between Agenda 2063 and the post-2015 development agenda, including the sustainable development goals.

37. The 2015 integration segment of the Economic and Social Council on the theme "Employment creation and decent work for all", which was organized by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and the International Labour Organization, devoted a session to address the unemployment challenge in Africa that highlighted the implications of youth unemployment, notably its impact on regional and international peace and security. The session further underscored the relevance of infrastructure development and industrialization as critical pillars for economic growth and job creation.

38. In view of the challenges of land disputes in driving resource-based conflicts in Africa, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) continued to support the African Land Policy Initiative, which is a joint programme of the African Union, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank.

E. Human rights and humanitarian affairs

39. Given the interdependence between peace, security, development and human rights, the United Nations intensified its human rights capacity development support to African Governments and institutions. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) provided secretariat support to the International Commission of Inquiry on the Central African Republic and the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in Eritrea. Support was also provided in the Central African Republic, where the transitional authorities promulgated legislation on 3 June 2015 establishing a special criminal court for grave violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. In Burundi, OHCHR sustained a human rights presence even after the expiration of the mandate of the United Nations Office in Burundi in December 2014 and opened its country office in January 2015.

[2] See the report of the Secretary-General on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (A/69/161).

40. On humanitarian issues, Africa received about 73.5 per cent of the total funding from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Central Emergency Response Fund in 2014. That is the largest proportion the region has ever received in a single year. This trend was driven mainly by humanitarian demands related to the crises in the Central African Republic and South Sudan, the Ebola outbreak in West Africa and low funding for humanitarian operations in countries in the Sahel and Horn of Africa regions.

F. Governance, rule of law and the administration of justice

41. As the situations in Burkina Faso and Burundi have demonstrated, challenges of constitutional reforms to extend presidential term limits, political exclusion and marginalization and electoral violence, which I discussed in my 2013 report (A/68/220-S/2013/475), continue to persist, with implications for peace and security. In response, the United Nations continued to support national and regional efforts to promote good governance, rule of law and the administration of justice.

42. For instance, in view of the importance of youth participation in economic, social and political life for good governance, conflict prevention and peacebuilding, the 2015 Economic and Social Council Youth Forum demonstrated the aspirations of Africa's youth to participate in regional, national and local governance processes, and be part of the implementation and monitoring of the post-2015 development agenda. At national levels, the United Nations Democracy Fund continued to strengthen the voice and participation of civil society groups, including women and youth, in democratic governance in Africa. At the global level, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, in collaboration with the Department of Public Information and the Economic Commission for Africa, continued to undertake advocacy in support of the African Peer Review Mechanism during the Africa Week that was held in October 2014.

43. In Somalia, under the Global Focal Point arrangement for Police, Justice and Corrections Areas in the Rule of Law in Post-Conflict and other Crisis Situations, the United Nations supported national authorities in developing the Somalia Joint Rule of Law Programme, aimed at establishing unified, capable, accountable and rights-based federal police and justice institutions. In Mali, UNDP and MINUSMA supported national efforts to strengthen the capacity of State and judicial institutions, including the drafting of a new five-year strategy for justice sector reform.

G. Women's empowerment and gender equality in peace and security

44. The United Nations continued to support continental efforts to advance the women and peace and security agenda. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) provided technical and human resource support to the Office of the Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security, appointed by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, including in co-organizing the African regional consultative meeting in January 2015 on the Global Study on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), ahead of the Security Council's high-level review in October 2015.

45. On the margins of the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2015, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, in collaboration

with the Department of Public Information, UN-Women and the African Union, organized two high-level events under the themes "Continental results framework on women, peace and security in Africa" and "Emerging leadership of Africa's young women and girls towards 2063". A number of African Ministers of Gender and Women's Affairs, parliamentarians, private sector representatives and civil society organizations participated in both events. They highlighted some of the priorities of African women and girls on key forthcoming continental and global frameworks. These were further discussed at the 16th meeting of the Regional Coordination Mechanism, held on 28 and 29 March 2015, on the theme "United Nations system support to the African Union 2015 Year of Women's Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063".

H. Security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

46. Security sector reform has become a core component of the United Nations engagement across peacekeeping and special political missions in Africa. For instance, in Somalia, UNSOM supported the Federal Government in developing a national security architecture, undertaking civil service reform of the Ministry of Defence, establishing a weapons and ammunition management system and enhancing public financial management of the security sector, in cooperation with the World Bank. In Mali, MINUSMA supported the development of an international security sector reform coordination mechanism. In the Central African Republic, the United Nations provided assistance to the process of regrouping, cantoning, auditing and vetting of the country's armed forces.

47. UNSOM also facilitated the inaugural meeting of the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Working Group chaired by the Somali Federal Ministry of National Security, to strategize on the National Programme for the Treatment and Handling of Disengaged Combatants. Subsequently, in January 2015, human rights monitors were deployed to all rehabilitation centres for disengaged combatants, marking an important milestone in ensuring compliance with international standards.

I. Countering terrorism and violent extremism

48. Owing to growing terrorist and extremist activities and threats during the review period, the United Nations accelerated its engagements with African Member States and regional and subregional organizations in developing measures to prevent and combat terrorism, under the framework of its Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

49. In April 2015, I jointly organized with the President of the General Assembly and the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations a thematic debate on "Promoting Tolerance and Reconciliation: Fostering Peaceful, Inclusive Societies and Countering Violent Extremism" that brought together faith leaders and other stakeholders to discuss practical strategies to counter growing intolerance and violent extremism. The United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force and its member entities, as well as the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre, have been supporting African efforts to counter terrorism and address conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism, including through the Integrated Assistance for

Countering Terrorism Initiative. Furthermore, the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism that I will present to the General Assembly later this year will address drivers of violent extremism and propose recommendations for Member States, the United Nations and other multilateral organizations.

50. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) continued to support efforts to promote the ratification and implementation of 19 international legal instruments on the prevention and combating of terrorism in Africa. In March 2015, UNODC and the International Institute for Justice and the Rule of Law launched a global project to strengthen the legal regime against emerging terrorist threats, to assist Member States in criminalizing foreign terrorist fighters in areas such as terrorist recruitment, incitement to terrorism and terrorism financing, among others. Nonetheless, the continued lack of agreement on the proposed comprehensive convention on international terrorism is hampering our efforts in this regard.

IV. Persistent and emerging challenges for Africa: the role of regional and subregional organizations in democratic governance in Africa

51. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/291, the present section highlights persistent and emerging challenges for Africa, focusing on the role of regional and subregional organizations in promoting democratic governance in Africa. It celebrates the momentum of progress that Africa has made towards entrenching democratic governance through the support of regional and subregional organizations. It also identifies remaining challenges and makes recommendations on the type of support required from the United Nations to further strengthen the role of African regional and subregional organizations in advancing democratic governance on the continent.

52. Democratic governance is an essential component and objective of the work of the United Nations. It represents a set of values, principles and mechanisms that provide the basis for the free expression of individuals under the protection of the rule of law and is at the heart of advancing human dignity, freedom and prosperity. While the nature of democratic governance may differ from one context to the other, depending on a country's political history, culture and societal ideals, its fundamental principles are universal.

53. Periodic elections, discussed in my 2013 report (A/68/220-S/2013/475), are a key feature of democratic governance. Other essential building blocks for democratic governance include effective and accountable institutions, human rights and the rule of law, and a vibrant and engaged civil society. Agenda 2063 calls for further investments in these areas, which are critical enablers for people-centred development in particular, and for Africa's structural transformation in general.

A. Regional and subregional organizations and democratic governance in Africa

54. Over the past two decades, and especially since the inception of the African Union in 2002, Africa has made considerable progress in strengthening democratic governance. African regional and subregional organizations, notably the African

Union, including its NEPAD and the African Peer Review Mechanism programmes, and the regional economic communities, have adopted and are implementing various normative and institutional frameworks on democracy, good governance, human rights and the rule of law. The Constitutive Act of the African Union highlights a determination to consolidate democratic governance principles, institutions and culture, as a basis for preventing and responding to conflicts and promoting inclusive and sustainable development. The African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance has become pivotal for strengthening democratic governance, especially as it informs the practice of the African Union and the regional economic communities of condemning military coups and other modes of unconstitutional changes of governments, including by repudiating such regimes and suspending their membership in the African Union and the relevant regional economic community.

55. Currently, most of Africa's regional efforts on democratic governance are organized under the aegis of the African Governance Architecture, which was established in 2010 as the overarching political and institutional framework for promoting democratic governance in Africa and became operational in 2012. The Architecture has been instrumental in enhancing collaboration and synergy between the African Union, the regional economic communities, the United Nations and other stakeholders across five interrelated areas: democracy and elections, human rights and transitional justice, governance and anti-corruption, constitutionalism and the rule of law, and humanitarian affairs. Additionally, the African Governance Architecture promotes gender equality, women and youth empowerment and citizen's participation, among other cross-cutting issues.

56. I wish to highlight three examples to illustrate how the African Governance Architecture enhances coordination and collaboration at the regional level. First, its work on democracy and political, corporate and economic governance is largely driven by the African Peer Review Mechanism. In particular, the Mechanism's National Programme of Action provides useful entry points for implementing the African Governance Architecture at national levels, although effective implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism programmes of action remains severely constrained by a lack of resources.

57. Second, the African Governance Architecture also enhances cooperation in electoral support, elections observation and monitoring. In this context, the African Union and the regional economic communities have developed guidance manuals and codes of conduct to increase professionalism and standardize procedures and methodologies for electoral management. They are also increasingly deploying observers to observe high-risk elections, thus contributing to enhancing the credibility of elections on the continent.

58. Third, in underscoring the nexus between democratic governance, peace and security, the African Governance Architecture complements the African Peace and Security Architecture. These linkages, however, need to be further strengthened at the operational level, especially between the African Governance Architecture and the conflict prevention organs of the African Peace and Security Architecture, such as the African Union Peace and Security Council and the Panel of the Wise. The Agenda 2063 flagship project on "Silencing the guns by 2020", discussed in my 2014 report (A/69/162-S/2014/542), provides a promising opportunity for action in this regard. The support of the Security Council for this initiative, as expressed in its

presidential statement (S/PRST/2014/27), provides a basis for additional United Nations assistance to these African Union organs.

59. At subregional levels, the regional economic communities are the implementing pillars of the African Governance Architecture. In addition, the communities have equally adopted and are implementing their region-specific policies aimed at promoting democratic governance in their member States. For instance, the East African Community is implementing its Protocol on Good Governance, ECOWAS its Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, IGAD its Protocol on Democracy, Governance and Elections, and SADC its Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections.

60. As a result, many African countries have constitutions with presidential term limits and constraints on unlimited power. Also, Africa has seen an increase in the conduct of periodic multiparty free and fair elections. Most African countries have acceded to various international and regional instruments on democratic governance and are undertaking various reforms to establish strong democratic institutions. There is a growing enabling environment for private sector development to enhance productivity and growth. A growing number of governments are increasingly recognizing the importance of civil society and have also institutionalized measures to promote civil society participation in politics and governance.

B. Persisting challenges in promoting democratic governance in Africa

61. While these efforts have contributed to enhancing democratic governance, challenges remain, as the situations in Burkina Faso and Burundi have shown. Persisting challenges to democratic governance in Africa include continued human rights violations, weak State institutions, crises of State legitimacy arising from an inability to deliver basic services, militarization of societies including through the resurgence of military coups as well as rebel and terrorist activities, mismanagement and politicization of diversity, social and economic exclusion and inequalities, and poor coordination and harmonization of regional and subregional approaches. The political landscape in the majority of countries continues to be dominated by de facto one-party systems, and a winner-takes-all approach to elections. As illustrated in Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi, incumbents hoping to prolong their time in power increasingly face significant public resistance, often undermining efforts to promote democratic governance. In addition, the participation of women in political processes is marginal.

62. These critical challenges are broadly organized in six categories in this report: preventing and mitigating electoral violence; human rights and the protection of vulnerable populations; growing insecurity and militarization of societies; limited capacity of the judiciary and anti-corruption institutions; strained State-civil society relations; and challenge of coordination and harmonization.

1. Preventing and mitigating electoral violence

63. In spite of progress being made in the conduct and management of periodic elections, a key challenge remains how to effectively prevent and mitigate election-related violence, especially in the light of a pervasive winner-takes-all approach to elections. Experience gained over the past decade confirms that prospects for prevention and mitigation are best when efforts combine both political and technical

elements, address root causes of conflicts, and are sustained over the long term and conceived within a broader strategic framework that supports and builds upon regional capacities and frameworks in Africa.

64. In this respect, the African Union and the regional economic communities are increasingly utilizing their institutional mechanisms for preventing, managing and resolving election-related conflicts, such as the Pan African Network of the Wise, special envoys and representatives, to support and complement the efforts of the African Union Peace and Security Council. The United Nations has supported regional and subregional organizations in this effort and has itself employed mediation and good offices in support of peaceful elections. This political approach has proven successful, including recently in Nigeria, where the country had its first peaceful transition of power to the opposition since moving to civilian rule in 1999. However, effective early warning and response to electoral violence, and capacities to ensure non-violent electoral processes, are still limited.

2. Human rights and the protection of vulnerable populations

65. Most African countries have signed and ratified a wide range of international and regional human rights instruments, including on the rights of women and children. They have also established measures and institutions to enforce and monitor implementation. The fulfilment of human rights obligations is inextricably linked to the promotion of democratic governance, and regional organizations have a key role to play in this regard.

66. For instance, the African Union adopted an approach of non-indifference, building on a collective responsibility to protect citizens from grave harm, such as human rights abuses, genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and unconstitutional changes of government. In practice, however, legitimate concerns about the actual state of human rights protection in Africa remain, which is particularly alarming in conflict situations and in countries experiencing terrorist threats, as is evident in Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Libya, Nigeria and South Sudan, among other countries. As governments have the primary responsibility to protect human rights, regional and subregional organizations sometimes find it challenging to effectively mobilize the necessary political will and resources to ensure compliance with existing human rights instruments at the national level.

3. Insecurity and continued militarization of societies

67. The African Union policy framework on security sector reform outlines a set of principles and measures for promoting democratic governance and oversight of the security sector, civil-military relations and reforming the armed forces. The security sector reform support of the United Nations to the African Union and regional economic communities focuses, inter alia, on strengthening the civilian oversight roles of the security sector, including by relevant ministries and parliaments, and facilitating dialogue aimed at ensuring a common national vision of security and of security sector reforms.

68. Despite these efforts, there are still significant security challenges. Years of autocratic and military rule in most African countries engendered a culture of militarization and regime protection that is antithetical to the norms and values of democratic governance. This militarized culture has proven relatively resistant to

change in some countries. The emergence of new rebel, militia, extremist and terrorist groups and their growing ability to undermine the role of governments has further complicated the security situation and is fast eroding democratic gains in some countries.

4. Limited capacity of critical democratic institutions

69. Transparent and accountable public institutions are critical for enhancing democratic governance. There have been concerted efforts to strengthen the capacities of State institutions, including the judiciary, to enhance social justice and social cohesion, ensure the peaceful resolution of conflicts, and combat corruption, among others. Yet, the capacities — financial, technological and human — of these institutions, in most African countries, are still limited and inadequate, in a manner that affects their independence.

70. African regional and subregional organizations themselves have their own internal and institutional challenges that hinder their ability to foster democratic norms and to help build effective institutions at the national level. For instance, they remain reliant on external financial support to effectively implement their respective democratic governance programmes. To ensure predictable and sustainable programming, African Governments need to ensure the provision of adequate resources at both the national and regional levels.

5. Relations between civil society and governments

71. The role of a vibrant civil society, including an independent media, is the bedrock of democratic governance. As the events in North Africa and Burkina Faso showed, popular uprisings and mass demonstrations in defence of democracy are a vivid reminder that beyond norms and policy instruments, it is ordinary citizens who are the custodians of democracy.

72. Despite an increasingly active civil society, however, there is need for continued capacity-building for civil society organizations, including on enhanced understanding of their relations with the State, policy research and advocacy to strengthen their contributions to democratic governance. Governments also need to do more to systematically engage civil society as important partners rather than adversaries in advancing democratic governance. The continued suppression of civil society, and political and economic exclusion, especially of youths and women, will only exacerbate human rights violations, trigger violent conflicts and slow down progress on democratic governance, economic development and sustainable peace.

73. The African Union, NEPAD, the African Peer Review Mechanism and the regional economic communities have developed a range of policies and instruments to facilitate the engagement of civil society and the private sector in democratic governance. Significant gaps remain, however, between norm-setting and norm implementation, which should be addressed, especially at national levels, to promote African civil society participation in democratic governance across the continent.

6. Challenge of coordination and harmonization

74. African regional and subregional organizations are developing at different paces, and this is reflected in the level of progress attained in developing and implementing their respective democratic governance instruments. Consequently,

there is a need to accelerate efforts to harmonize those instruments and enhance coordination at operational levels between the African Union, regional economic communities and the United Nations, taking into consideration the principles of subsidiarity and comparative advantages. In the absence of a coordinated and coherent approach, norms and instruments could likely be inconsistently applied, undermining the credibility of regional and subregional interventions and creating opportunities for national actors to exploit the situation.

75. The positive outcome of a coordinated approach was evident in Burkina Faso, where swift joint action by the United Nations, the African Union and ECOWAS was instrumental in preventing a further deterioration of the situation and bringing about a national consensus on the way forward. Against this backdrop, the situation in Burundi would also benefit from enhanced collaboration between the East African Community, the African Union and the United Nations towards finding a consensual political solution to the current crisis.

C. Enhanced United Nations support to regional and subregional organizations in democratic governance in Africa

76. The United Nations has been a longstanding and committed partner to African countries, the African Union, NEPAD, the African Peer Review Mechanism, the regional economic communities and civil society organizations in ongoing efforts to promote democratic governance. Given the new impetus provided by Agenda 2063, the United Nations will continue to enhance its support to Africa in promoting democratic governance within the context of the implementation of the first 10-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063. The proposals under consideration in the intergovernmental negotiation process on the post-2015 development agenda further give credence to the need for this support, as it includes some of the aspirations on democratic governance enshrined in Agenda 2063.

77. The United Nations, including through the UNDP Democratic Governance Group, will further enhance support to African regional and subregional organizations in fostering democratic governance through, inter alia, institutional and human capacity development, policy advice, technical support and strategic partnerships. The United Nations support to the African Union and the regional economic communities will also be channelled through the Regional Coordination Mechanism. In this respect, additional efforts will be made to strengthen the efficacy of the Mechanism's cluster system, as well as of the Interdepartmental Task Force on African Affairs, to better deliver coherent and coordinated United Nations support to Africa, in the context of the implementation of Agenda 2063 and its first 10-Year Implementation Plan.

78. Building on our joint framework for enhanced partnership with the African Union and the regional economic communities in peace and security, the United Nations will also support efforts to strengthen the institutional and operational linkages between the African Governance Architecture and the African Peace and Security Architecture. Similarly, efforts will be made to enhance collaboration, in particular between the African Union, the regional economic communities and United Nations peacekeeping operations, special political missions and regional offices in the area of democratic governance.

79. The United Nations will also, in the context of the Human Rights Up Front initiative of the Secretary-General, continue to strengthen collaboration with the African Union and the regional economic communities to support African efforts in preventing and responding to serious human rights violations. Further, the United Nations will support implementation of the African Union Human Rights Strategy for Africa, including through increased support to the Pan African Parliament, the African Court and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, and national human rights institutions. The United Nations will also continue to leverage civil society participation in democratic governance in Africa, including through the United Nations Democracy Fund. Efforts in this regard will particularly focus on women and youth.

80. The United Nations will further engage African regional and subregional organizations in utilizing its Monitoring Mechanism, established by the General Assembly in resolution 66/293, to review commitments made by all relevant parties to democratic governance in Africa.

V. Conclusion and recommendations

81. **The year 2015 marks the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations and will witness the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda and the financing for development outcomes. At the same time, 2015 witnessed the adoption of two new policy frameworks for Africa's transformation and renaissance, notably Agenda 2063 and its first 10-Year Implementation Plan. These international and regional frameworks are complementary in their aspiration to enhance inclusive people-centred development in Africa. It is important that the international community and the United Nations ensure coherence and synergy between the global and continental frameworks and fully support their implementation in Africa. For instance, the international community and the United Nations should continue to support the African Peace and Security Architecture and the African Governance Architecture to address new issues and challenges in peace operations and post-conflict peacebuilding, in ways that address the concerns and aspirations contained in the African positions on these issues.**

82. **To further enhance the strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union, Member States should extend support for the implementation of PAIDA, which is anchored in Agenda 2063 and will succeed the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union. In the light of their role as implementing agencies for Agenda 2063 and its first 10-Year Implementation Plan, the international community and the United Nations should strengthen their cooperation and support for the regional economic communities, including through PAIDA.**

83. **The role of African regional and subregional organizations, notably the African Union, NEPAD, the African Peer Review Mechanism and the regional economic communities, remains critical for complementing the efforts of African Governments to promote and consolidate democratic governance. The international community and the United Nations should increase their support to the African Union in strengthening the institutional capacities of all organs and instruments of the African Governance Architecture, including the African Peer Review Mechanism, the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights and**

the Pan African Parliament, as well as of the regional economic communities in addressing structural challenges to democratic governance.

84. An enhanced role of the Regional Coordination Mechanism and the Interdepartmental Task Force on African Affairs is essential for fostering system-wide collaboration in monitoring international commitments to democracy, good governance, human rights and the rule of law, within the context of the United Nations Monitoring Mechanism, Agenda 2063 and PAIDA. In this regard, the United Nations should further strengthen the role of the Regional Coordination Mechanism and the Interdepartmental Task Force on African Affairs so as to enhance coherence and coordination between the United Nations, the African Union, NEPAD, the African Peer Review Mechanism, the regional economic communities and other relevant organs in consolidating peace and security, democratic governance, and development in Africa.

85. The African Peer Review Mechanism remains the key Africa-led voluntary process for the promotion of economic, political and corporate governance on the continent. It is vital for providing timely remedial measures for addressing deficits in democratic governance. The international community and the United Nations should assist the Mechanism in addressing challenges it faces to conduct national reviews and implement its national programmes of action, including on institutional reforms.

86. The importance of civil society, particularly women and youth, for Africa's future is reflected in the decision of the African Union to designate 2015 the Year of Women's Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063, and 2016 as the Year of Human Rights, focusing on the human rights of women. The United Nations should strengthen support to African Member States and regional and subregional organizations to enhance the active participation of civil society, including women and youth, in processes to promote democracy, good governance, human rights and the rule of law.

87. Agenda 2063 underscores the need for well-functioning, accountable, inclusive and participatory political and economic systems and institutions that are also capable of effectively ensuring checks and balances. African Member States, with the support of the United Nations, should further strengthen the capacities of critical democratic institutions to enhance public service delivery and accountability. These include national human rights institutions, elections management bodies, parliaments, media, civil service, anti-corruption bodies, judiciaries, law enforcement and security institutions, among others.

88. In the light of the critical linkages between democratic governance, human rights, durable peace and sustainable development, the United Nations should continue to increase synergies between the African Peace and Security Architecture and the African Governance Architecture in preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction, within the context of the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for an Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security. In particular, the United Nations should enhance joint field-based actions with African regional and subregional organizations in strengthening early warning and democratic security oversight capacities, preventing election-related violence and addressing conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism and violent extremism. The United Nations should also enhance cooperation with the regional economic communities in

supporting democratic governance through its regional offices, special political missions and peacekeeping missions.

89. It is critical that the United Nations accelerate action to support African regional and subregional organizations in the implementation of the "Silencing the guns" flagship project, in accordance with the Security Council's presidential statement of 16 December 2014 (S/PRST/2014/27), in which the Council "expresses its readiness to contribute and calls on all, in particular relevant United Nations entities, to help achieve this goal including by considering defining a concrete five-year actionable plan in support of the goal of achieving a conflict-free Africa by 2020".

90. In the light of the reviews of United Nations peace operations, the United Nations peacebuilding architecture and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, there is an urgent need for the United Nations to identify practical and effective frameworks and mechanisms to help to integrate the perspectives, interests and concerns of African regional actors in the planning and implementation of security and development strategies for African countries in conflict and post-conflict situations more systematically and consistently, so as to better articulate the regional dimension of conflict and post-conflict challenges.

91. In the light of the impact of the Ebola virus disease, the international community, including the United Nations, should continue to support response efforts led by national governments to get to zero cases and address the profound socioeconomic impact of the outbreak. Stakeholders must pursue partnerships that help the affected countries to become resilient and self-sufficient by strengthening national capacity, including of the public health systems across the region and Africa as a whole.